

# Public Document Pack



To: All Members of the Authority



R. Groves  
Monitoring Officer

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Our ref AK/RG

Date: 8 May 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **AUTHORITY** to be held at **1.00 pm** on **THURSDAY 16TH MAY 2024** in the Liverpool Suite - Fire Service Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle.

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

<https://youtube.com/live/UpLzzcSXZk?feature=share>

Yours faithfully,

*PP – A. Kirby*

Monitoring Officer

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# **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

## **AUTHORITY**

**16 MAY 2024**

## **AGENDA**

### **Members**

Cllr Les Byrom (Chair)  
Cllr Brian Kenny  
Cllr James Roberts  
Cllr Sam Gorst  
Cllr Gillian Wood  
Cllr Edna Finneran  
Cllr Linda Maloney  
Cllr Lynne Thompson  
Cllr Jan Grace  
Cllr Lesley Rennie  
Cllr Paul Tweed  
Cllr Dave Hanratty  
Cllr Pat Moloney  
Cllr Doreen Knight  
Cllr Terry Byron  
Cllr Sue Murphy  
Cllr Barbara Murray  
Cllr Ed Lamb  
PCC Emily Spurrell  
Mr Anthony Boyle

**1. Apologies**

To consider any apologies for absence.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 24)**

To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

**3. Declaration Of Interest**

To consider any Member declarations of interest.

**4. National Fire Standards Annual Update April 2024 (Pages 25 - 66)**

To consider an update relating to the implementation of National Fire Standards (CFO/25/24).

**5. Overview of Scrutiny 2023-2024 (Pages 67 - 72)**

To consider the report which relates to the overview of scrutiny 2023-2024 (CFO/26/24).

6. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2024 - 2027** (Pages 73 - 86)

To consider the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2024 – 2027 (CFO/27/24).

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## **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

### **BUDGET AUTHORITY**

**29 FEBRUARY 2024**

### **MINUTES**

**Present:** **Councillors** Les Byrom (Chair), Barbara Murray, Brian Kenny, Dave Hanratty, Doreen Knight, Ed Lamb, Edna Finneran, Gill Wood, James Roberts, Jan Grace, Lesley Rennie, Linda Maloney, Lynne Thompson, Pat Moloney, Paul Tweed, Sam Gorst, Sue Murphy, Terry Byron and Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside Emily Spurrell.

|                       |                                   |               |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>In attendance:</b> | Chief Fire Officer                | Phil Garrigan |
|                       | Deputy Chief Fire Officer         | Nick Searle   |
|                       | Assistant Chief Fire Officer      | Dave Mottram  |
|                       | Monitoring Officer                | Ria Groves    |
|                       | Director of Finance & Procurement | Mike Rea      |

**1. Apologies**

There were no apologies received.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no items of interest declared for this meeting.

**3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

**4. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority Budget and Financial Plan 2024/2025 - 2028/2029**

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan, introduced the report which presented the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority Budget and Financial Plan for 2024/2025 – 2028/2029.

Director of Finance and Procurement, Mike Rea, presented a summary of the report, which included the necessary financial information for setting and approving the Financial Strategy and to set a balanced 2024 Revenue Budget based on a 2.98% increase in the council tax precept.

Mike Rea explained that the report considered a 5-year capital programme and potential borrowing requirements, with a capital programme of £35.871 million, of which £29.631 million would be funded through prudential borrowings.

Members were advised that the programme had increased by £9.340 million including £4.041 million for the additional year 2028/2029 of the programme. The £9.340 million also included £1.428 million increase due to inflation and a supply shortages. Mike Rea drew Members' attention to pages 31-33 which detailed areas of capital spend.

Mike Rea outlined that pages 35-36 summarised the minimum revenue provision which is the sum set aside each year to repay the debt associated with capital borrowing. The recommendation is for the Authority to adopt a similar strategy to the current MRP determination and use the asset life method for all unsupported borrowing.

Mike Rea drew Members' attention to pages 38-41 of the report which detailed the impact of the proposed capital borrowing over a number of prudential indicators.

Mike Rea advised Members that the Authority was required to prepare a Treasury Management Strategy, and this was covered in Section F of the report. He explained that the proposed investment strategy was consistent with the current strategy, with institutional limits and credit ratings outlined on page 46 of the report.

Paragraphs 119-132 outlined the revised assumptions, costs, and available funding for the 2024/2025 budget and the updated medium-term financial Plan. This, included an increase in the annual pay award from 2.5% to 3% in 2024/2025, followed by 2.5% per annum thereafter.

Mike Rea explained that there was an increase in the Firefighter Pension Scheme employers' contribution from 28.8% to 37.6% from 2024/2025 onwards, following the 2020 Actuarial Review wherein the Authority will receive a grant in 2024/2025. Mike Rea highlighted that there was an increase in Government funding for 2024/2025, including a Business Rates Compensation Grant and a Firefighter's Pension Grant, with an increase of £4.599 million above the current plan's assumption.

The table on page 63 summarised the impact of the changes to the Medium-Term Financial Plan and the forecast position for 2024/2025, indicating a balanced position subject to the key assumptions remaining consistent throughout the year.

Mike Rea outlined the Authority's reserves and how they were proposed to be managed for 2024/2025.

It was noted that £35.571 million needed to be raised through the council tax precept to balance the revenue budget for 2024/2025, with a proposed increase in the charge for Band D of 2.98% from £88.61 to £91.25. However, Members were advised that most people in Merseyside paid Band A, and that change equated to an increase of just over 3p a week.

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance and his team for efficiently producing the budget and expressed gratitude to the staff and the whole organisation for their work in keeping Merseyside's communities safe. He commended the Authority's community leadership and history of great administration.

He noted that this was the 49<sup>th</sup> budget meeting of the Authority, during which time the Authority had saved thousands of lives and billions of pounds in property through its prudent use of resources.

Members attention was drawn to the recommendations starting on page 9 of the agenda.

The Chair expressed his ambitions of the future and that he had been lobbying the shadow Fire Minister on a range of issues he would like to see addressed to better support Fire and Rescue Services across the country. It was suggested that a new Fire Safety Act was needed to consider the new risks such as alternative fuels, and the need for an Independent Fire Service College. It was suggested that there were a wide range of issues for which new legislation was crucial.

The Chair thanked the staff again for the work they did in Merseyside and internationally as well as those colleagues present and past who had served over the last 50 years, noting that MFRA was the best performing Fire Authority in the country.

The Chair of the Authority moved the proposed Budget Resolution. The Resolution was seconded by Councillor Byron.

Councillor Kenny expressed support for the budget and wanted to place on record the Authority's thanks to all staff that had participated in creating the budget. Councillor Kenny also acknowledged the challenges faced by the Authority over the past 10 years, with the Service facing drastic cuts and he recognised the positive progress made by the Authority in recent years. Increasing the number of firefighters, fire control operators and appliances were all highlighted as positive decisions made by the Authority. He placed on record his thanks to the Chief Fire Officer, Director of Finance and all staff involved in drawing up the budget. He also thanked all staff for the fantastic work they do all year round on behalf of the Members and their communities.

Councillor Grace asked for further detail on the firefighter's pension issue outlined on page 55 and Mike Rea explained that the Authority had been receiving a Pension Grant for the past 4 years following the 2016 Actuarial Pension Review for firefighter pensions, this grant had now formed part of the Revenue Support Grant for this financial year. The outcome of the 2020 Actuarial Review resulted in an increase in the employers' pension contribution from 28.8% to 37.6% for firefighters. The Authority will receive a further grant to cover the increase in employers' pension contribution from the government. The government have advised that this Grant was for one year only and therefore the Authority had assumed it would only receive a proportion of the grant from the next financial year until further information from Government was provided.

Councillor Hanratty expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Chief Fire Officer and Director of Finance for dealing with the challenges over the years, noting the negative effect of austerity during that time. He commended the Authority on its transparency and consulting with the Trade Unions when making decisions and felt that spirit of cooperation benefited the people of Merseyside. Concerns about planning for the future were highlighted due to the one-year settlement issued by Government and it was hoped that this would change.

Councillor Roberts agreed with Councillor Hanratty and highlighted the impact of austerity and the pandemic on the residents of Merseyside. He noted that inflation had also been a concern in recent times and despite of that, the Authority had delivered an ambitious and progressive budget which Members should be proud of. He noted the inclusion of enhanced mobilisation in the budget which could improve response times and in turn save lives.

The Chair asked for a vote on the budget and the recommendations listed on pages 9 and 10 of the report through a show of hands. Members approved the budget and all recommendations unanimously. .

It was mentioned that the auditors regarded the Authority's work highly and was an exemplar of best practices.

**RESOLVED** that;

1. the 2024/2025 service budget set out in the report was noted;
2. the Director of Finance and Procurement's recommendation on maintaining the current general fund balance at £3.000m and maintaining the reserves as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 of this report be endorsed;
3. the current plan to increase the precept by just under 3% (2.98%) for 2024/2025, raising the Band D Council Tax from £88.61 to £91.25 and confirm the strategy for future precept rises be endorsed (the plan assumes further increases of 2% in each year after that);
4. the assumptions in developing a five-year financial plan outlined in the report and approve the 2024/2025 budget estimate of £74.191m be endorsed;
5. the 2024/2025 – 2028/2029 updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) outlined in the report and summarised in Appendix C be approved;
6. the Capital Programme as summarised in Appendix B be approved;
7. the discretionary fees and charges uplift outlined in the report and summarised in Appendix E be approved;
8. the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) strategy for 2024/2025, as this report outlines in paragraphs 87 to 96 be approved;



9. the prudential indicators relating to the proposed capital programme, outlined in paragraphs 100 to 101 of this report be noted;
  - a) the Treasury Management Strategy outlined in Section F and the Treasury Management indicators set out in the section for External Debt
  - b) Operational Boundary for Debt
  - c) Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure
  - d) Upper limits on variable rate exposure
  - e) Limits on the maturity structure of debt
  - f) Limits on investments for more than 364 days

be approved

10. that the recommendations above provide an approved framework within which officers undertake the day-to-day capital and treasury management activities be noted.

***Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Resolution 2024/2025 – 2028/2029***

1. *The Authority has a proven track record in managing its financial affairs well and making tough choices to balance the budget. Over the 2010/2011 – 2019/2020 period, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) suffered one of the most significant cuts in Government funding of any Fire and Rescue Service in the country. The Authority faced up to the Government funding cuts and had no choice over that period but to approve an unavoidable reduction in the operational front line, with reductions in: -*
  - *The firefighter establishment reduced from 1,000 full-time equivalents (FTE) to 620 FTEs, 38% lower,*
  - *The number of fire stations reduced from 26 full-time stations to 22 maintained by a variety of demand-led duty cover systems,*
  - *The number of appliances available reduced from 42 wholetime fire appliances immediately available and 1 retained (43 appliances in total) to 26.*
2. *Between 2019/2020 and 2023/2024, the Authority's new Chair, Vice Chairs, and the new Principal Officer team looked to reverse some of the Operational Response and Protection services cuts. Introducing demand led duty systems and prudent financial management the Authority has subsequently: -*
  - *Increased the firefighter numbers on Merseyside by an additional 22 posts to 642,*

- Increased the fire control operators from 32 to 35 including, new senior management and training officer posts.
  - Increased the number of retained (on-call) contract holders,
  - Introduced new duty systems which avoided the proposed closure of Liverpool City and Wallasey overnight
  - Increased fire engine/appliance availability from 26 to 32,
  - Introduced a new fire engineer post to work with partners to ensure residents' safety in high-rise buildings.
  - Introduced specialist teams to deal with all foreseeable risks,
  - Increased investment in specialist appliances and other operational equipment,
  - Approved a new Training and Development Academy and Hybrid Station with rescue capability – **on target to go live on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024,**
  - Increased the supervisory management provision through the creation of a further 20 new Crew Manager roles,
  - Established several retained contracts to underpin the Hybrid/DCWTR Duty system (reflecting the IRMP 2021/2024 goal of having 32 fire engines available),
  - Set aside a specific allocation of budget to deal with the risks posed by alternative fuels (Lithium Batteries) and the risks posed by contaminants to firefighters.
3. These bold plans were in response to emergent and foreseeable risks from fire and other emergencies, particularly the service's ability to respond to large and/or protracted incidents, as well as the need to enhance protection functions in the light of the Grenfell Tower fire, the Manchester terror attack, and other major incidents.
4. The 2024/2025 Budget continues to build on that foundation with further investment in the frontline being proposed, leading to;
- Increase fire engine/appliance availability from 32 to 34, enhancing the Authority's resilience and response to foreseeable risk (specialist response).

- *Enhanced Mobilisation, making crews quicker to respond to emergencies through a pre-alert system, which will deliver additional functions within the Fire Control that provide early notification of a potential incident,*
  - *Learning Management System for the administration, automation and delivery of educational courses, training programs and the development of e-learning courses. Including a new Learning and Development Advisor role and a new E-learning Developer role,*
  - *Increased investment in specialist clothing, training, and equipment,*
  - *A designated Station Manager to focus on contaminants and the associated risk to firefighters,*
  - *Investment in areas directly related to the achievement of the serious violence duty,*
  - *A diverse and culturally competent workforce.*
5. *The investment the Authority has made in the Service since 2019/2020 has ensured Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service continues to deliver its vision to be the best fire and rescue service in the UK.*
  6. *In the last HMICFRS inspection, the Service was congratulated on its performance in keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) graded Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service's performance across 11 areas and found the service was 'outstanding' in three areas, 'good' in five areas, and 'adequate' in three areas. The Service were not 'required to improve' in any areas.*
  7. ***The service secured three 'Outstanding' judgments for its work preventing fires and risk, its response to significant incidents, and for making the best use of its resources.***
  8. *That said the Authority remains concerned that the impact of the previous service reductions due to Government funding cuts went too far, and they are steadfast in their ambition to build back into the Service. The permanent investment it has managed to put into the Service since 2019/20 only delivers some of the additional resources it believes are required. The Authority also calls upon the Government to make the temporary 2020/2021 – 2024/2025 Protection Services grants that allowed a short-term investment in these services permanent.*

9. *The 2024/2025 Government funding settlement is another one-year settlement; the Authority urges the Government to reinstate the multi-year approach for 2025/2026 and beyond.*
10. *The 2024/2025 Government Funding settlement and grant increase to cover the business freeze will see the Authority receive approximately a 6% increase on its 2023/2024 settlement. While a 6% increase in Government funding would generally be welcomed, the Authority and Country have and continue to face a period of significant inflationary pressure, particularly around energy, fuel, and pay, which has meant a large part of the Settlement increase will have to be used to cover inflationary pressures rather than for improving services.*
11. *The Authority welcomes the Government's intention to address the engrained challenges that underpin regional inequality, which is essential for the success of the "levelling-up" agenda. The most fundamental intervention is for the Government to reassess the quantum of funding available in the longer-term, and to ensure that critical services are funded based on local levels of need and deprivation. Failure to do this will put the rights of the most vulnerable in society at risk. There is a direct correlation between levels of deprivation and fire deaths. The Authority's adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty, as detailed in the Equalities Act 2010, reinforces this commitment.*
12. *The Authority has consistently opposed the application of council tax referendum principles as they are bureaucratic, undemocratic, and have no reference to underlying inflation or demand for local services. The Authority would prefer to see the referendum principles abolished, allowing individual authorities to set their own council tax levels.*
13. *The Authority is concerned that reliance upon considerable council tax rises and the inclusion of council tax in Core Spending Power means that the burden of paying for local services is being progressively passed on to local council taxpayers. This means that funding increasingly fails to be matched to local needs. This is not "levelling up" and is inherently unfair – as local authorities with a small council tax base only benefit financially in a very limited way.*
14. *The Authority understands that the Government is looking at reforms to the local government funding formula and to determine an up-to-date assessment of the needs of each local / fire authority. The outcome of the fair funding review will feed into the future Government funding assessment for the Authority. The Authority would ask that the Government provide sufficient permanent funding based on a fair funding system that adequately reflects local levels of need and deprivation.*
15. *To protect the investment the Authority has made and plans to make in the Service, the Authority proposes a council tax increase of just under 3%.*

16. *The effect of the budget on the council tax will be a **Band D Council Tax of £91.25, which equates to an increase of £2.64 or 5p per week on the 2023/2024 figure.***
17. *Most people in Merseyside will pay **Band A Council Tax of £60.83, which equates to an increase of £1.76 or 3p per week on the 2023/2024 figure.***
18. *The Authority recognises that the Fire and Rescue Service must provide resources based on risk, demand and vulnerability. However, Merseyside faces more demands than most other services due to the high levels of deprivation that our communities experience. Fire deaths and injuries are the highest in areas of deprivation, equally higher demand is placed in areas and communities where inequality and poverty is prevalent.*
19. *We urge this Government to reflect on the impact the last 10+ years of cuts are having on the Fire and Rescue Service and properly review all risks facing the country in the light of emerging risks (for example, a heightened terrorist threat or responding to increased flooding events or wildfires through climate change). We hope that resources are allocated in a way that allows Merseyside to continue to respond effectively to local and national threats.*
20. *Future government funding cuts may force the Authority to reduce frontline services further. Therefore, the Authority will continue to lobby the Government against the level of cuts in funding made since 2010/2011 and highlight the consequences that further cuts will have on the effective delivery of vital emergency services.*
21. *The Authority has undertaken lobbying more extensively than any other Authority in the Country. We believe this may have avoided further and deeper cuts, and our views on future funding have been heard at the highest levels of Government. The Authority has said it will not allow these unsafe levels of cuts to just roll over us; we will use every political device we can to improve funding to maintain the highest levels of public and staff safety here on Merseyside. As delivery lead partner with the Home Office (HO), our position has made us a super authority; we will develop this relationship as positively as possible.*

### **The Financial Plan**

22. *To balance the financial plan, the Authority will adopt the following strategy*

- *Prepare a five-year financial plan based on the final Local Government Finance Settlement figures announced on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024 that;*
    - i. deals with the financial challenge arising from the known Government funding support up to 2024/2025 and*
    - ii. although the financial plan has projected Authority spending and Government funding up to 2028/2029, 2025/2026 and future years' estimates are based on assumptions that are unpredictable as future Government funding for the Fire and Rescue Service is subject to a number of Government reviews and the national economic performance. Therefore, the Authority has agreed to note any financial challenge in future years at this point and will deal with any financial issues in future budget rounds.*
  - *Assumes a 3% pay award for all staff in 2024/2025 (an increase of 0.5% on the 2023/2024 MTFP) and a 2.5% pay award for all staff in 2025/26 and future years.*
  - *Includes a provision of £140k for the 2023/2024 non-firefighter pay award above the amount covered within the 2023/2024 budget.*
  - *Invests in Youth Engagement Activities, including the Prince's Trust and Fire Cadets Programmes.*
  - *Invests in Authority's Net Zero Route Map Implementation.*
  - *Continue to invest in the Service's infrastructure and required operational asset refresh.*
  - *The MTFP includes a budget to support proposals in the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2024 – 2027.*
  - *To set council tax increase in line with its financial plan of just under 3% for 2024/2025 and 2% from 2025/26 and future years (based on anticipated referendum limits).*
  - *The Authority will continue where possible to identify additional efficiencies to re-invest in the front line.*
  - *The Authority will continue to focus its search for efficiencies on collaboration, management, support services costs, and other technical reviews.*
23. *Note that there is risk in the Authority's current plan, particularly around the assumptions over future pay increases and government funding.*

24. *The Authority recognises that the Chief Fire Officer needs sufficient resources to respond to any recommendations on future national fire and rescue practices, Fire and Rescue National Framework guidelines, Fire Standards, and ongoing local challenges – emergent risk. It, therefore, recognises that the Chief Fire Officer will need to continue to manage operational crewing levels and appliance availability on a dynamic basis using various response systems where necessary under his delegated powers as the financial plan proceeds to delivery.*

### **Council Tax**

25. *The Authority had already assumed a council tax increase at the maximum level allowed by the Government before a referendum was required. The Government has confirmed that the threshold for 2024/2025 is an increase of just under 3%.*
26. *Because of the cuts in its frontline services arising from previous Government funding reductions, the Authority must protect and invest in MFRS to maintain the safety and protection of the Merseyside community. Therefore, It has no choice but to maintain its plan and increase council tax to the maximum allowed before a referendum is required. In 2024/2025, the Authority has approved an increase of just under 2.98% to minimise the impact on the services to Merseyside in the future.*
27. *The impact of the budget on the council tax will be a Band D Council Tax of £91.25, an increase of 5p per week on the 2023/2024 figure.*
28. *Most people in Merseyside will pay Band A Council Tax of £60.83, an increase of 3p per week on the 2023/2024 figure.*

### **Interoperability with Blue Light Partners**

29. *This Authority is fully committed to closer collaboration with our emergency service colleagues across the county. Many collaborative successes have been achieved so far, including: -*
- (i) The delivery of the Joint Command and Control Centre with Merseyside Police,*
  - (ii) Sharing seven sites with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS),*
  - (iii) The creation of a Joint Police and Fire Station in Knowsley,*
  - (iv) Extensive joint planning and exercising,*
  - (v) Support to Health partners.*
30. *The Authority instructs the Chief Fire Officer to continue to build upon this success and, in particular, to actively seek out opportunities to work with*

*NWAS and Merseyside Police around sharing buildings and other assets, demand management, and corporate service functions.*

- 31. The Authority instructs the Chief Fire Officer to build upon its National Resilience and UK International Search and Rescue Authority lead roles and, in particular, to actively seek out opportunities to work with government departments, along with national and international stakeholder/fire and rescue services – capitalising on its new training and development academy and its national and international standing.*

### **Working with other Partners**

- 32. The Authority will continue to work in partnership with each District Council to explore opportunities to mutually benefit each Authority in dealing with these and future financial challenges.*
- 33. The Authority will examine the impacts of the devolution agenda and how best we can understand and develop constructive dialogue with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.*

### **Reserves**

- 34. The Authority has prudently planned to meet its financial challenges over the medium term. The Authority's plan is based on the key assumptions around grant, pay, and pension cost changes.*
- 35. The Authority recognises that there are substantial risks associated with these assumptions and that, particularly in light of the current economic climate, it is not unreasonable to expect a significant degree of financial uncertainty and risk, which will vary across the life of the financial plan. The Authority will, therefore, set a medium term financial plan based upon these key assumptions, recognising that it may need to vary that plan to cope with changes arising. Specific reserves have been established to mitigate risks, such as the Inflation Reserve £1.2m (pay award and price inflation) and the Smoothing Reserve £1.4m (future Government funding levels) reserves.*
- 36. The Authority seeks to provide its firefighters and other staff with the right equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE), vehicles, and training facilities to enable them to fulfil their role safely and at the best standard possible. As the Government does not make any capital funding available, the Authority has a strategy of building up the Capital Reserve of £2.1m to fund a significant proportion of this investment to maintain borrowing at an affordable and sustainable level.*
- 37. The Authority established a £1.8m recruitment reserve to fund the recruitment of new firefighters in advance of the expected firefighter retirements, as it expects large numbers of the current workforce to retire*



over the next five years. This will ensure the Chief Fire Officer has sufficient competent firefighters. The Authority believes that a wholetime (with retained) professionally trained workforce is the most resilient and effective way of delivering a Fire and Rescue Service to its communities. It is fully committed to maintaining this approach.

38. *The reinvestment in frontline provision made in 2019/2020 – 2023/2024 has ensured the services response standard has been met throughout the period.*
39. *In light of the risks within the financial plan, the Authority agrees to maintain the reserves set out in Appendix B to this resolution and maintain a general revenue reserve of £3.0m.*

### **Capital Programme**

40. *The Authority approves the Capital Programme as set out in CFO/13/24, which includes a total investment of £35.871m over 2024/2025 – 2028/2029. The programme for 2024/2025 shall be approved as £10.958m.*
41. *The Authority notes the prudential indicators that this programme produces and recognises that the proposed capital investment programme is prudent, sustainable, and the borrowing is affordable. This programme uses the freedoms available to the Authority under the prudential regime. It proposes 'prudential' borrowing of £6.218m in 2024/2025 as part of a total borrowing of £29.631m across the life of the plan.*
42. *In the light of the capital programme and the prudential indicators, agree on the Treasury Management Strategy and the indicators set out in that strategy for: -*
  - (i) *External Debt*
  - (ii) *Operational Boundary for Debt*
  - (iii) *Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure*
  - (iv) *Upper limits on variable rate exposure*
  - (v) *Limits on the maturity structure of debt*
  - (vi) *Limits on investments for more than 364 days*

### **Basic calculations**

43. *Following consideration of the report of the Director of Finance and Procurement CFO/13/24 and having taken into account views expressed in consultations and all other relevant matters under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended, (the "Act"), the Authority determines its budget requirement for the financial year 2024/2025 as follows.*

44. Approves the capital expenditure programme for the financial year 2024/2025 for the total of £10.958m as set out in report CFO/13/24 and the five-year programme totalling an investment of £35.871m, and in this respect notes the advice of the Director of Finance and Procurement that the programme is prudent, sustainable and the borrowing affordable.

45. The Authority resolves as follows:

(a) It is noted that on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, the Authority calculated the Council Tax Base 2024/2025 for the whole Authority area as 389,826.08 [Item T in the formula in Section 42B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)].

(b) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2024/2025 in accordance with sections 40 to 47 of the Act:

The Authority calculates the aggregate of: (A)

- the expenditure which it estimates it will incur in the financial year 2024/2025 in performing its functions and will charge to the revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practices under S42A (2) (a) of the Act as £87.922m,
- the allowance, as the Authority estimates, will be appropriate for contingencies in relation to amounts to be charged or credited to the revenue account for the year 2024/2025 in accordance with proper practices under S42A (2) (b) of the Act as £0.000m,
- the financial reserves which the Authority estimates it will be appropriate to raise in the year for meeting its estimated future expenditure for 2024/2025 under S42A (2) (c) of the Act as £1.031m,
- the financial reserves are sufficient to meet so much of the amount estimated by the Authority to be a revenue account deficit for any earlier financial year as has not been already provided for under S42A (2) (d) of the Act as £0.000m.

The Authority must also calculate the aggregate of (B)

- the income which it estimates will accrue to it in the year 2024/2025 and which it will credit to a revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practices, other than income that it estimates will accrue to it in respect of any precept issued by it under S42A (3) (a) of the Act as £52.783m,
- The amount of the financial reserves that the Authority estimates that it will use to provide for the items mentioned in S42 (2) (a and b) under S42A (3) (a) of the Act as £0.599m.

*If the aggregate calculated under A above exceeds that calculated under B above, the Authority must calculate the amount equal to the difference, and the amount calculated is to be its council tax requirement for the year under S42A (4) (Item R in the formula in S42B of the Act).*

*The Authority calculates the basic amount of its council tax by dividing the aggregate amount of S42A (4) (item R) divided by the council tax base (item T) above. The council tax requirement for 2024/2025 is £35,571,630, and the council tax base is 389,826.08, equal to a £91.25 precept for a Band D property. This calculation meets the requirements under S42B of the Act.*

46. *The Authority calculates the council tax sums pursuant to S47 of the Act as follows:*

| 2024/25       | Property Band                 |          | Increase    |             |
|---------------|-------------------------------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| £             |                               |          | £           | %           |
| £60.83        | For properties in Band        | A        | 1.76        | 2.98        |
| £70.97        | For properties in Band        | B        | 2.05        | 2.97        |
| £81.11        | For properties in Band        | C        | 2.35        | 2.98        |
| <b>£91.25</b> | <b>For properties in Band</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>2.64</b> | <b>2.98</b> |
| £111.53       | For properties in Band        | E        | 3.23        | 2.98        |
| £131.81       | For properties in Band        | F        | 3.82        | 2.98        |
| £152.08       | For properties in Band        | G        | 4.40        | 2.98        |
| £182.50       | For properties in Band        | H        | 5.28        | 2.98        |

47. *The Authority calculates the precept amounts payable by each constituent district council pursuant to S48 of the Act as follows:*

| PRECEPT           |            | AUTHORITY |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|
| £                 |            |           |
| 3,554,826         | Payable by | KNOWSLEY  |
| 10,489,667        | Payable by | LIVERPOOL |
| 7,889,375         | Payable by | SEFTON    |
| 4,878,316         | Payable by | ST.HELENS |
| 8,759,446         | Payable by | WIRRAL    |
| <b>35,571,630</b> |            |           |

48. *The Authority requests the Director of Finance and Procurement to arrange for precepts to be issued to the constituent district councils pursuant to S40 of the Act before 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024, such sums to be payable by ten equal instalments on or before the following dates:*

|           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| Friday    | 19/04/2024 |
| Wednesday | 29/05/2024 |
| Thursday  | 04/07/2024 |
| Friday    | 09/08/2024 |
| Tuesday   | 17/09/2024 |
| Wednesday | 23/10/2024 |
| Thursday  | 28/11/2024 |
| Wednesday | 08/01/2025 |
| Thursday  | 13/02/2025 |
| Monday    | 17/03/2025 |

49. *The Authority notes that the Director of Finance and Procurement has advised that the 2024/2025 budget is based upon robust estimates.*

## 5. **Asset Management Plans**

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan, introduced the Asset Management Plans and explained that it underpinned the aspirations of the Authority, which included an increased number of fire engines and the authority's firefighting capability within the budget-setting process.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that the Authority aimed to align its physical assets and systems with its core aims and objectives for 2024/2025-2028/2029. The Chief Fire Officer identified three asset management plans that were in the report: infrastructure as to the estate (property and building), ICT (data and technology) and transport (fleet).

The Chief Fire Officer noted the aspirations of the Authority with regards to its property including those for the new TDA at Long Lane and the existing estate. Members were advised that the Authority sought to provide real investment in infrastructure throughout the service so that the stations were better for the staff and communities that use those spaces. Members were advised that the Authority was seeking to refurbish Bromborough, Kirby and Wallasey station over the next few years.

Members were advised that the ICT provision included a focus on technological advancements for fire control including Enhanced Mobilisation and the applications used by the Authority.

The Chief Fire Officer noted the Authority's fleet and transport objectives. Members were advised that as part of the IRMP, a 'Scorpion' vehicle would be introduced to further expand the Authority's capabilities.

The Chair mentioned that the Authority had delivered 50 years of service and the estate had changed dramatically during that time with investments made in new fire stations. The Chair highlighted the importance of the new TDA and investing in fire stations, equipment, and working environments for the future as part of the Authority's legacy.

The Chair also congratulated the Police and Crime Commissioner, Emily Spurrell, on her pregnancy.

Councillor Grace commented on the refurbishment of fire stations and how well they promoted Equality Diversity & Inclusion. Councillor Grace also made positive comments regarding the ability to house the Beacon and Princes Trust teams, which not all fire stations can accommodate. The Chief Fire Officer noted that some of the older stations didn't meet the Authority's aspirations around accessibility for the communities it serves and as such a lot of work had been undertaken on trying to address that.

With regards to youth engagement, the Chief Fire Officer advised that the Prince's Trust utilised existing fire kit and equipment that was no longer operational as part of its youth engagement work.

Councillor Thompson reported that she couldn't recall ever visiting Heswall Fire Station and emphasised that it was built in 1940 and had been refurbished in the last 18 months.

The Chair noted that some of the older stations needed investment to support a modern work force.

Councillor Maloney mentioned that St Helens Fire Station had a lot of investment and informed the group that there was a fire appliance demonstration in St Helens Town Centre that had been received well by those in attendance.

**RESOLVED** that the 2024/2025-2028/2029 Asset Management Plans provided as appendices to this report be approved.

## **6. Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2024/27**

The Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan, introduced the Draft Community Risk Management Plan report for 2024/27.

It was discussed that this report, the People Plan and the MTFP were the key documents for the Authority in order to drive performance and ensure effectiveness. The Chief Fire Officer mentioned that the plan has been renamed from an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) to a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and the contents of the plan may change based on the results of the consultation process.

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted the importance of assessing all foreseeable risks on behalf of communities and the inclusion of prevention and protection measures. Members were advised that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had been conducted and public and staff engagement was taking place.

Members were made aware that after the consultation process had been finalised, the report would be brought back to the Authority at a future meeting after the consultation process had concluded.

The Chief Fire Officer expressed the intent to build on the achievements of the Authority and increase its capabilities and resources. Since the last IRMP, the Authority had increased its number of firefighters, introduced specialist capabilities, made over 190 visits to people's home and businesses and increased the number of protection officers after Grenfell.

This CRMP included proposals to build on its strong foundation by increasing the number of engines from 32 to 34, potentially reintroducing a small fires unit, enhancing water rescue capabilities, consider alternative fuels, improve control room technology and considering how to best resource stations.

The Chief Fire Officer expressed that the Service will continue to support and assist the Ambulance Service. It was noted that conversations around medical response, were taking place nationally with the support of the Fire Brigades Union.

The Chief Fire Officer discussed Prevention being reinforced this year as the Authority adopted the Socio-Economic duty, and it was highlighted that this action was very much predicated on reinforcing and targeting intervention for the most vulnerable from the inequalities that exist across Merseyside as well as focusing in on sheltered accommodation.

The Chief Fire Officer also discussed the introduction of a new Framework for fire safety around Protection and Enforcement.

It was noted that the Authority would provide national and international training from the new £40-million Training and Development Academy and it would continue to work with the Home Office around National Resilience and UK ISAR alongside.

Members were advised that the Authority will deliver any changes as and when the Authority can.

The Chief Fire Officer focused on the levels of deprivation in Merseyside and the Authority's ambition to address inequality of opportunity. Members noted the ambition to achieve net zero by 2040 but emphasised it would not wait until that date if it could make changes sooner.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside Emily Spurrell, raised the importance of road safety and the importance of the collaboration between the Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service. The Chief Fire Officer acknowledged the importance of road safety and mentioned ongoing efforts to address it as part of its community safety work.

Councillor Wood asked if the introduction of more 20mph zones had reduced the number of road traffic accidents. The Chief Fire Officer advised that it was too soon to assess the impact of those changes, but the Authority supported the introduction of 20mph zones.

The Chair noted the lobbying undertaken by the Authority on sprinklers, suppression systems, retreading tyres, safety methods in vehicles, electric batteries and more. The role of the Authority is managing safety of communities was highlighted through lobbying central government.

Councillor Hanratty discussed the importance of public consultation and the feedback received. The Chief Fire Officer noted that public consultation informs decision-making, and amendments may be made based on the views expressed. It was agreed to present the consultation feedback to the Authority.

The Financial Plan for the next three years was discussed, and the Chief Fire Officer noted the importance of having a 3-year budget to enable the Authority to plan and adapt to financial changes over the next three years.

With regards to lobbying for funding, the Chief Fire Officer emphasised the importance of the matter and highlighted the ongoing efforts by the Authority to secure a better deal for Merseyside.

**RESOLVED** that the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2024/27 attached at Appendix A to be subject to a period of 12 weeks consultation prior to final approval, publication and implementation be approved (a designed version of the draft Plan will be published for consultation purposes).

#### **Date of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

Close

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| MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY |  |                |               |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------------|---------------|
| MEETING OF THE:                      | AUTHORITY  |                |               |
| DATE:                                | 16 MAY 2024                                      | REPORT NO:     | CFO/25/24     |
| PRESENTING OFFICER                   | CHIEF FIRE OFFICER PHIL GARRIGAN                 |                |               |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:                 | DEB APPLETON                                     | REPORT AUTHOR: | JACKIE SUTTON |
| OFFICERS CONSULTED:                  | STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM                        |                |               |
| TITLE OF REPORT:                     | NATIONAL FIRE STANDARDS ANNUAL UPDATE APRIL 2024 |                |               |

|             |             |  |
|-------------|-------------|--|
| APPENDICES: | APPENDIX A: | IMPLEMENTATION TOOL DASHBOARD                |
|             | APPENDIX B: | NATIONAL FIRE STANDARDS CRITERIA UPDATE 2024 |
|             | APPENDIX C: | FIRE STANDARDS BOARD REVIEW 2023-24          |

## Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of progress towards compliance with the National Fire Standards.

## Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note the progress against achieving compliance with the National Fire Standards and the work being undertaken within Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service ('MFRS') to implement and ensure compliance with the National Fire Standards.

## Introduction and Background

### The role of the Fire Standards Board

3. The role of the Fire Standards Board ('Board') is to oversee the identification, organisation, development and maintenance of professional Standards for fire and rescue services in England.
4. The Board is responsible for approving Standards and the approach to their development. It sets the priorities for Standards development work. It will commission work based on proposals from third parties, monitor progress with ongoing work and approve completed work.

5. It will seek to ensure that any Standards presented for approval have:
  - been developed in line with the agreed development process;
  - undergone appropriate consultation with subject matter experts and relevant stakeholders; and,
  - undergone an independent quality assurance process.

### **Scope of Standards**

6. To help categorise the areas requiring Fire Standards and the guidance that is likely to underpin them, an Activity Framework has been developed. This enables the Board to capture all the activities performed by fire and rescue services irrespective of their governance model, budget or location and who provides those functions (for example, services that are part of a local authority).
7. The principles of this approach are founded on the experience gained through the National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP). The Activity Framework is intended to:
  - provide a complete road map so it is clear where the NFCC and FSB are going;
  - help avoid duplication and overlap which may result in conflicting guidance if developed in isolation; and,
  - be easy to navigate for all audiences.

### **Standards Development**

8. The National Fire Chiefs Council, through its Central Programme Office (CPO) provides administrative and policy support to the Fire Standards Board.
9. The Board and CPO work together to develop the suite of professional Standards. They will follow a commonly recognised process originating from the British Standards Institute and used in many other sectors.

In this process the Board is responsible for:

- creating and maintaining a framework of professional Standards that are applicable to, or in use within, fire and rescue services in England;
- considering the existing fire and rescue landscape through findings of existing research, the fire reform programme, operational or organisational learning from past incidents and from HMICFRS inspection outputs;
- identifying gaps within the framework and identifying priorities for new or revised professional Standards;
- working with the NFCC to plan and align Standards development work with the strategic commitments and their existing programmes;
- reviewing proposals and commissioning work;
- ensuring published Standards remain current and fit for purpose through both benefits realisation and periodic review;

- commissioning work to review and revise published Standards as and when required; and,
- building and maintaining relationships with partners across fire and rescue services, including those in the Devolved Administrations to inform the work they commission and approve.

The CPO are responsible for:

- preparing proposals for Standards development work;
- facilitating development work when commissioned;
- managing the periodic review cycles of approved Standards;
- monitoring and informing the Board where a Standard may need revision outside of agreed cycles; and,
- monitoring benefits realisation and periodic reporting to the Board.

### **Approved Fire Standards**

10. To date the Fire Standards Board have written, consulted on and published the following Standards:

- Code of Ethics
- Communication, Engagement and Consultation
- Community Risk Management Planning
- CRMP Implementation
- Data Management
- Emergency Preparedness and Resilience
- Emergency Response Driving
- Fire Control Implementation
- Fire Investigation
- Leading and Developing People
- Leading the Fire Service
- Operational Competence
- Operational Learning
- Operational Preparedness
- Prevention
- Protection
- Safeguarding

At the time of writing further Fire Standards have been through consultation and are expected to be published soon:

- Internal Governance and Assurance
- Procurement and Commercial

11. In addition, small changes have been made to the Leadership Standards to reflect recommendations from the HMICFRS review of fire and rescue service culture.
12. The latest Fire Standards Board Review is attached at Appendix C for more information about the work of the Board.

## **Implementation Tools**

13. Following on from feedback received from fire and rescue services, the NFCC has developed an Implementation Tool for each Fire Standard.
14. Each tool has been created to assist fire and rescue services in planning, delivering and reporting on the implementation of Fire Standards. They could also be used to provide useful evidence for HMICFRS inspections.
15. The tools help services to record actions which are needed to be taken to move towards achieving the Fire Standard. When completed, they provide a benchmark from which progress over time can be measured.

## **MFRS Implementation of the National Fire Standards**

16. When a new Standard is released for consultation it is added to an intranet Portal page with a link to the live consultation with deadlines for responding. The Area Manager or Senior Manager with responsibility for the Standard is advised to review and respond to the consultation. Where appropriate, the response is quality assured or sent on behalf of the Chief Fire Officer.
17. When a new Standard is published, to ensure compliance, the Implementation Toolkit is used as a form of gap analysis to identify where MFRS are meeting the Standard, or areas for improvement.
18. The Toolkit tracker is then presented, by the responsible officer, at the appropriate Strategic Board meeting to illustrate compliance, or areas for improvement with the Standard. The individual Boards should show progress in achieving the Standard. Highlights of the individual Standards will be presented annually to Strategy and Performance Board.
19. A summary of progress towards achieving the Standards is presented to Authority annually. See Appendix A and B for the latest RAG rated updates. Members will note that the Protection, Operational Learning, Operational Preparedness, Fire Investigation, Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Standards are entirely complete and signed off. Good progress is being made against the other Standards, with some areas of green and amber, with a small number of red. Some aspects of the Standards are time bound so will take longer than others to implement. An example of this is the Community Risk Management Planning Standard (CRMP) published in 2021. Responsible officers are aware of areas for improvement and have been working towards them since publication, but the three-year cycle of the CRMP (formerly IRMP) means that some intended improvements will not be fully delivered until after the publication of the new CRMP in July 2024. The Service is committed to implementing the Standards fully and all responsible officers are working towards that objective.

20. Implementation toolkits will be kept on the Portal and reviewed regularly. Information about the Standards Board and the Standards is also available on the Portal, providing information for all staff.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

21. Equality and Diversity actions form part of the work of the National Fire Standards Board and the work undertaken to implement each Standard is equally impact assessed as appropriate.

### **Staff Implications**

22. There are no direct staffing implications contained within this report.

### **Legal Implications**

23. The Standards allow greater scrutiny and alignment across the sector mitigating the risk to the Authority when carrying out its activities and service to the community.

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

24. The National Fire Standards should provide the same or an improved level of service for the same or a reduced cost.
25. Actions required to ensure compliance that have cost implications should be maintained within existing budgets.

### **Risk Management and Health & Implications**

26. Consideration of Health and Safety and successful risk management is paramount in complying with the National Fire Standards.

### **Environmental Implications**

27. Consideration of the environment is part of complying with National Fire Standards.

### **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.*

28. Compliance with the National Fire Standards will assure the Authority and the people we serve on Merseyside that we are providing the best possible service.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**NONE**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>CRMP</b>    | <b>C</b> ommunity <b>R</b> isk <b>M</b> anagement <b>P</b> lan  |
| <b>HMICFRS</b> | <b>H</b> is <b>M</b> ajesty's <b>I</b> nspectorate of <b>C</b> onstabulary and <b>F</b> ire & <b>R</b> escue <b>S</b> ervices |
| <b>NFCC</b>    | <b>N</b> ational <b>F</b> ire <b>C</b> hiefs <b>C</b> ouncil  |



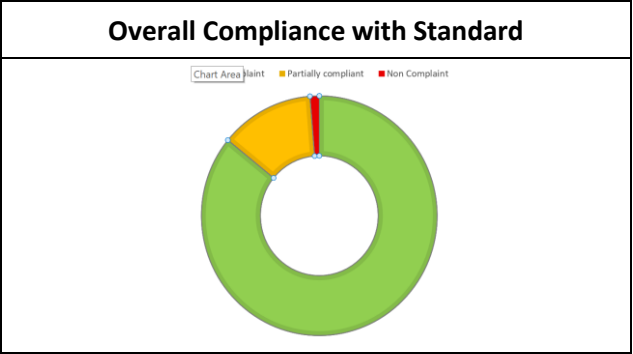
TEMPLATE FIRE STANDARD  
IMPLEMENTATION TOOL

Please fill in the contact details below:











Fire and Rescue Service

Merseyside


APRIL 2024 UPDATE



| Criteria | Description                | Priority |        |      | Impact |        |      | Compliance      |                      |               | Chart |
|----------|----------------------------|----------|--------|------|--------|--------|------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|-------|
|          |                            | Low      | Medium | High | Low    | Medium | High | Fully Compliant | Partically Compliant | Non Compliant |       |
| 1        | Emergency Response Driving | 6        | 0      | 0    | 6      | 0      | 0    | 5               | 1                    | 0             |       |
| 2        | Operational Preparedness   | 0        | 3      | 16   | 0      | 3      | 16   | 27              | 0                    | 0             |       |
| 3        | Operational Competence     | 0        | 9      | 18   | 0      | 9      | 18   | 42              | 1                    | 0             |       |
| 4        | Operational Learning       | 6        | 19     | 12   | 3      | 17     | 17   | 37              | 0                    | 0             |       |
| 5        | Code of Ethics             | 0        | 1      | 9    | 0      | 1      | 9    | 1               | 7                    | 2             |       |
| 6        | Community Risk (CRMP)      | 7        | 5      | 1    | 4      | 8      | 1    | 9               | 4                    | 0             |       |

|    |                               |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |   |
|----|-------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|
|    |                               |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |   |
| 7  | Protection                    | 0  | 1  | 2  | 0  | 2  | 1  | 3  | 0  | 0 |    |
| 8  | Prevention                    | 7  | 23 | 35 | 2  | 21 | 42 | 65 | 0  | 0 |    |
| 9  | Safeguarding                  | 0  | 9  | 2  | 0  | 13 | 18 | 32 | 2  | 0 |    |
| 10 | Fire Investigation            | 7  | 21 | 32 | 4  | 23 | 33 | 60 | 0  | 0 |    |
| 11 | Emergency Preparedness        | 3  | 14 | 29 | 3  | 14 | 29 | 47 | 0  | 0 |   |
| 12 | Data Management               | 0  | 13 | 3  | 0  | 13 | 3  | 4  | 12 | 0 |  |
| 13 | Leading and Developing People | 29 | 3  | 0  | 29 | 3  | 0  | 29 | 10 | 0 |  |
| 14 | Leading the Service           | 0  | 2  | 0  | 1  | 1  | 0  | 34 | 9  | 0 |  |
| 15 | Fire Control                  | 1  | 0  | 8  | 1  | 0  | 8  | 6  | 3  | 0 |  |
| 16 | Communications and Engagement | 7  | 8  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 6  | 6  | 12 | 4 |  |



|       |  |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |   |   |
|-------|--|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|---|---|
| Total |  | 73 | 131 | 173 | 136 | 136 | 201 | 407 | 61 | 6 |  |
|-------|--|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|---|---|

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| NATIONAL FIRE STANDARDS           |   |  |        |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--------|
|                                   | CRITERIA  | Notes on Red status -<br><i>Description of work needed</i> | STATUS |
| <b>EMERGENCY RESPONSE DRIVING</b> |   |  |        |
| 1                                 | Comply with legislation and guidance that applies to emergency response driving   |  |        |
| 2                                 | Adopt and align their emergency response driver training to the NFCC Emergency Response Driver and Instructor Framework   |  |        |
| 3                                 | Adopt and align their emergency response driver instructor training to the NFCC Emergency Response Driver and Instructor Framework  |  |        |
| 4                                 | Ensure that records of driver competency and refresher training are kept and maintained   |  |        |
| 5                                 | Ensure that their driver training provision is periodically independently quality assured   |  |        |
| 6                                 | Ensure that both managers who are responsible for emergency response driving and those working as driving instructors, contribute to the continual improvement of driver training standards by communicating, sharing learning and experiences with the NFCC network of fire and rescue service driving instructors and centres through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Engaging on the NFCC Workplace online forum</li> <li>b. Supporting the national Driver Training Advisory Group (DTAG) through regional structures</li> <li>c. Considering appropriate representation at relevant national events and conferences</li> </ul> |  |        |
| <b>OPERATIONAL PREPAREDNESS</b>   |   |  |        |
| 1                                 | Undertake all appropriate risk assessments, as required under legislation, to prepare for an operational response   |  |        |
| 2                                 | Review existing cover models, resources, equipment and training against all appropriate risk assessments  |  |        |
| 3                                 | Carry out capabilities-based planning to support emergency preparedness and response from a national to a local level   |  |        |
| 4                                 | Determine their responsibilities for operational response and be fully prepared to deliver them   |  |        |
| 5                                 | Have a health and safety policy for the operational environment that clearly outlines the responsible parties and their obligations   |  |        |
| 6                                 | Undertake a review of how the organisation is structured and functions, to confirm its ability to support operational preparedness; if there are any gaps identified there should be a clear plan for making appropriate changes  |  |        |

|                               |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 7                             | Develop and embed operational policies, procedures and tailored guidance based on the National Operational Guidance, unless by evidenced exception its content is not relevant to the service  |  |  |
| 8                             | Deliver the strategic actions provided in the suite of National Operational Guidance, unless by evidenced exception a strategic action is not relevant to the service; the strategic gap analysis tool may be used to support this process                               |  |  |
| 9                             | Train its operational and fire control personnel to use the hazard and control measure approach provided in the National Operational Guidance, applying risk assessment, decision-making and risk management skills  |  |  |
| 10                            | Align relevant policies, procedures and tailored guidance in preparation for working with other fire and rescue services or responder agencies   |  |  |
| <b>OPERATIONAL COMPETENCE</b> |  |  |  |
| 1                             | Comply with health and safety legislation when delivering an operational response  |  |  |
| 2                             | Base their operational policies, procedures and tailored guidance on National Operational Guidance, unless by exception its content is not relevant to the service   |  |  |
| 3                             | Have policies, procedures and tailored guidance in place, that provide operational and fire control personnel with current information and instructions about foreseeable hazards and the control measures that can be applied   |  |  |
| 4                             | Base their training for operational and fire control personnel on National Operational Guidance  |  |  |
| 5                             | Train operational and fire control personnel to a level of competence that enables them to carry out operational activities safely and effectively; this includes the ability to recognise hazards and put effective control measures in place to mitigate those hazards |  |  |
| 6                             | Be following the tactical actions provided in the suite of National Operational Guidance, unless by exception a tactical action is not relevant to the service   |  |  |
| 7                             | Be able to evidence how their policies, procedures and tailored guidance are linked to the training of operational and fire control personnel  |  |  |
| 8                             | Be able to evidence any exceptions to National Operational Guidance, with an appropriate impact assessment   |  |  |
| 9                             | Develop working arrangements with other fire and rescue services and responder agencies, to improve their operational response to multi-agency incidents   |  |  |
| 10                            | Be able to evidence the training they have received to maintain their competence   |  |  |
| 11                            | Be able to demonstrate their ability to safely and effectively apply risk assessment, decision-making and risk management skills   |  |  |
| 12                            | Use the training specification component of National Operational Guidance to inform their training needs analysis  |  |  |

|                             |   |  |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| 13                          | Work within regional, national or thematic groups to develop and improve their policies, procedures, tailored guidance and training for operational response  |  |  |
| <b>OPERATIONAL LEARNING</b> |   |  |  |
| 1                           | Comply with legislative duties to monitor, maintain and improve the health, safety, and wellbeing of its employees  |  |  |
| 2                           | <p>Recognise learning as a strategic level responsibility to embed learning into its management structures and processes and by appointing a responsible person for operational learning who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. is responsible for ensuring that actions to support learning are implemented</li> <li>b. manages information received from the wider sector and determines what further action should be taken</li> <li>c. determines what information their service shares with the fire and rescue service or the wider sector, if appropriate</li> <li>d. makes clear how their service will engage with national level learning arrangements through an identified single point of contact</li> </ul> |  |  |
| 3                           | Have a process in place to act on National Operational Learning Action Notes and Information Notes  |  |  |
| 4                           | <p>Have processes in place for capturing learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. at incidents</li> <li>b. post-incident</li> <li>c. as a result of training exercises undertaken both internally and multi-agency / cross border</li> <li>d. as a result of near miss or accident investigations that may be relevant to operational response</li> <li>e. from any other sources</li> </ul>   |  |  |
| 5                           | Evaluate learning to identify, assess and implement improvements  |  |  |
| 6                           | Evidence that learning is evaluated and that improvements have been adopted and embedded  |  |  |
| 7                           | <p>Be able to demonstrate established mechanisms for sharing learning via any combination of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. internally</li> <li>b. with neighbouring services and other responder agencies</li> <li>c. using the National Operational Learning system</li> <li>d. using the JESIP Joint Organisational Learning system</li> </ul>   |  |  |
| 8                           | <p>Apply three fundamental approaches to managing operational learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. use National Operational Guidance as the common framework to identify the areas of operational activity where change may be required</li> <li>b. use a consistent approach to analyse and objectively compare</li> </ul>  |  |  |

|                                       |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|
|                                       | what has happened against the control measures contained in National Operational Guidance which provide good practice<br>c. maintain an open reporting culture, even when details of learning are sensitive; concentrating as National Operational Learning does, on the 'how' and 'why' of the learning and not the "who" |  |  |
| 9                                     | Reference the NFCC National Operational Learning: Good practice guide for fire and rescue services in policies, procedures, tailored guidance and training   |  |  |
| <b>CODE OF ETHICS</b>                 |  |  |  |
| 1                                     | <b>A fire and rescue service must:</b><br>i. Adopt and embed the Core Code to demonstrate that the service is fully committed and compliant at both an individual and corporate level  |  |  |
|                                       | ii. Ensure the attitudes, professional behaviours and conduct described within the core code are reflected in its decision-making, policies, procedures, processes, and associated guidance that govern how the service manages and supports its workforce   |  |  |
|                                       | iii. Provide training and support to all those who work for, or on behalf of, a service to achieve their understanding of the Core Code and an appreciation of their responsibilities in adhering to it  |  |  |
|                                       | iv. Not detract from the Core Code   |  |  |
| 2                                     | <b>Those who lead services and those who work for, or on behalf of, the service must:</b><br>i. Understand, respect, and follow the principles of the Core Code and demonstrate this by their commitment to it and their responsibility for upholding it   |  |  |
|                                       | ii. Conduct themselves in accordance with the Core Code  |  |  |
| 3                                     | <b>Those responsible for the governance of fire and rescue services, whilst complying with their own ethical codes must:</b><br>i. hold the Chief Fire Officer to account for the implementation of the Core Code at a local level   |  |  |
|                                       | ii. Play a proactive role in challenging behaviour inconsistent with the Core Code   |  |  |
|                                       | iii. Ensure strategies, policies and performance measures are in place to promote and embed a positive and inclusive culture   |  |  |
| 4                                     | <b>A fire and rescue service should:</b><br>i. Designate a senior leader who is responsible for promoting the Core Code throughout the service and ensuring that all those who work for, or on behalf of, the service understand its contents and what is expected of them   |  |  |
| <b>COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN</b> |  |  |  |
| 1                                     | Utilise and share accurate data and business intelligence (from both internal and external sources) to support key activities such as evidenced-based decision making, horizon scanning, cross border risk identification and organisational learning.   |  |  |
| 2                                     | Ensure transparency in the community risk management planning process through either implementing and/or supporting  |  |  |

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|                   | ongoing engagement and formal consultation processes, ensuring these are accessible and publicly available.   |  |  |
| 3                 | Ensure that organisational decisions and the measures implemented support equality, diversity, inclusivity, are non-discriminatory and are people impact assessed.  |  |  |
| 4                 | Meet its legislative, framework and governance requirements linked to Community Risk Management.  |  |  |
| 5                 | Be able to evidence its external and internal operating environment and the strategic objectives the community risk management plan is seeking to achieve.  |  |  |
| 6                 | Identify and describe the existing and emerging local, regional and national hazards it faces, the hazardous events that could arise and the risk groups (People, Place, Environment and Economy) that could be harmed.   |  |  |
| 7                 | Analyse risk, consider its risk appetite, determine the risk levels and prioritise risk accordingly.  |  |  |
| 8                 | Make decisions about the deployment of resources based on the prioritised risk levels and planning assumptions involved. This should be carried out with consideration to internal and external resource availability (people, financial and physical) including collaborative, cross-border and national resilience assistance. Consideration should also be given to other strategic influences such as consultation feedback, stakeholder engagement and political objectives. |  |  |
| 9                 | Continually evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency and delivery of the community risk management plan and the organisational impact of risk management decisions.   |  |  |
| 10                | Be able to clearly define who has overall accountability for the community risk management plan and responsibility for the various components contained within it.  |  |  |
| 11                | Provide training and/or support (where required) to all who are involved in the development, management and implementation of the community risk management plan.   |  |  |
| <b>PROTECTION</b> |   |  |  |
| 1                 | Identify and understand its risk profile related to the built environment, including premises they need to regulate, through its community risk management planning   |  |  |
| 2                 | Gather and maintain an accurate risk profile and supporting information about relevant premises in a manner that is compliant with legislation  |  |  |
| 3                 | Make available information about premises to all employees who need it when required, allowing them to be informed, stay safe and effectively carry out their duties  |  |  |
| 4                 | Ensure there is a mechanism for employees to feedback any new or emerging information or risks about buildings as a result of them carrying out their duties, to enable it to maintain an accurate risk profile   |  |  |
| 5                 | Plan and deliver effective and robust protection activities to mitigate and reduce the risks identified through its community   |  |  |

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|    | risk management planning in compliance with the Regulator's Code and the principles of Better Regulation   |  |  |
| 6  | Maintain an ability to deliver necessary statutory protection activities at all times  |  |  |
| 7  | <p>Plan and deliver engagement with those who are responsible for keeping relevant premises safe to provide advice and education in a constructive and helpful way on matters relating to fire safety, petroleum, and explosives legislation, including:</p> <p>a. working to reduce the number of Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) that are generated from premises protected by automatic fire detection and fire alarm systems and</p> <p>b. actively promoting and supporting Primary Authority Partnership schemes in compliance with relevant Primary Authority legislation, where appropriate</p> |  |  |
| 8  | Respond to statutory and non-statutory consultations, where the service is a regulator, in a timely and appropriate way  |  |  |
| 9  | Collaborate with fire and rescue services and other partners to deliver protection and enforcement activities in the most efficient and effective way possible   |  |  |
| 10 | <p>Recruit, train, develop and maintain a competent and professional protection workforce by:</p> <p>a. adopting the Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators (the framework), where relevant to the role and embedding it into local policies, procedures, tailored guidance, and training materials and</p> <p>b. recording and monitoring competence.</p>  |  |  |
| 11 | Have in place necessary succession planning and processes to maintain a sustainable competent protection workforce   |  |  |
| 12 | Provide support to operational response employees and any other employees undertaking protection activities to build knowledge and understanding   |  |  |
| 13 | Demonstrate how it monitors and evaluates the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of its protection activities  |  |  |
| 14 | Generate a culture which embraces national and organisational learning allowing it to identify and capture feedback from a range of sources; evaluate, share and act upon it to drive innovation and continuous improvement and enhance future performance   |  |  |
| 15 | Where Fire Investigation is managed within its protection function, a fire and rescue service must investigate, report on and learn from the cause and behaviour of fires, working with others when appropriate  |  |  |
| 16 | Where Petroleum or Explosives regulation is managed within its protection function, a fire and rescue service must investigate, report on and learn from causes of petroleum and explosives related incidents.   |  |  |
| 17 | Maximise opportunities gained from supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) network by sharing learning and experiences, collaborating with others and contributing to the continual improvement of fire protection activities   |  |  |
| 18 | Contribute and support national campaigns and initiatives, where appropriate and where resources are available   |  |  |



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| <b>PREVENTION</b>   |   |  |  |
| 1                   | Identify those who are most at risk in its community and target prevention activities in an inclusive way, through its community risk management planning   |  |  |
| 2                   | Adopt a person-centred approach that places the individual and the community it serves at the core of its prevention activity   |  |  |
| 3                   | Develop a prevention strategy and plan with the flexibility to proactively respond and adapt to the changing needs of its community, and for this to be supported by a named lead for prevention from within the service  |  |  |
| 4                   | Recruit, train, and develop employees and volunteers, working with others where relevant, to establish and maintain a competent and professional prevention workforce of which are trained in safeguarding  |  |  |
| 5                   | Optimise resources to proactively engage and educate the community it serves, working collaboratively with others as and when appropriate   |  |  |
| 6                   | Demonstrate inclusivity by recognising the diversity of its community and providing equality of access  |  |  |
| 7                   | Utilise and share accurate data and intelligence, from a variety of sources to support evidence-based decision making and the deployment of appropriate resources for prevention activities   |  |  |
| 8                   | Demonstrate how it monitors and evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of its prevention activity   |  |  |
| 9                   | Generate a culture which embraces national and organisational learning allowing it to identify and capture feedback from a range of sources; evaluate, share and act upon it to drive innovation and continuous improvement and enhance future performance  |  |  |
| 10                  | Investigate, report on and learn from the cause of fires, including the unusual spread of fire, where fire investigation activity is managed within its fire protection function, working with others, when appropriate   |  |  |
| 11                  | Contribute to the continual improvement of prevention activities coordinated through the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) network  |  |  |
| 12                  | Contribute and support national campaigns, where appropriate and where resources are available  |  |  |
| <b>SAFEGUARDING</b> |   |  |  |
| 1                   | <b>Have a responsible person within the service at the highest strategic level (where reasonable), that demonstrates the services commitment to the importance of safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring:</b><br>a) the service is and remains compliant with legislation and follows relevant guidance |  |  |
|                     | b) the service's Designated Safeguarding Leads or Head of Safeguarding, where applicable, are appropriately qualified and suitably trained in accordance with legislation and the requirement of Local Safeguarding Adults and Children's Boards  |  |  |
| 2                   | Only use accredited persons to provide safeguarding training  |  |  |

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| 3                         | Educate, train and support employees and volunteers, relevant to their role, in the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of harm  |  |  |
| 4                         | Align local training to its Community Risk Management Plan and the NFCC's Safeguarding Guidance for Children, Young People and Adults   |  |  |
| 5                         | Implement appropriate and proportionate processes that minimise the risk of recruiting people who may be unsuitable to work with those who are at risk of harm  |  |  |
| 6                         | Work effectively with others (including cross-border working) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of harm   |  |  |
| 7                         | Have agreed systems, standards and protocols to maintain effective and efficient information sharing, ensuring data is made available to all those who need it, in accordance with national and local guidelines  |  |  |
| 8                         | Demonstrate inclusivity by recognising the diversity of its community and providing equality of access  |  |  |
| 9                         | Use the NFCC Safeguarding Guidance for Children, Young People and Adults (including the Self-Assessment Toolkit)  |  |  |
| 10                        | <b>Contribute to the continual improvement of safeguarding adults and children at risk of harm by communicating, sharing learning and experiences with the NFCC network of fire and rescue service safeguarding leads through, but not limited to:</b>  |  |  |
|                           | a) engaging with NFCC forums  |  |  |
|                           | b) supporting the NFCC Safeguarding Workstream through national and regional structures;  |  |  |
|                           | c) considering appropriate representation at relevant national events and conferences   |  |  |
| <b>FIRE INVESTIGATION</b> |   |  |  |
| 1                         | Investigate the cause and origin of fires, complying with the appropriate codes of practice and conduct, where relevant to the level of fire investigation it carries out. These may be:<br>a) non-complex fire scenes (Tier 1 fire investigation); and/or<br>b) complex fire scenes and non-terrorist explosions (Tier 2 fire investigation).  |  |  |
| 2                         | Report on and learn from the cause and behaviour of fires, working with others when appropriate, to:<br>a) ensure its local risk profile remains current by building a comprehensive understanding of existing, emerging and future risks within its community;<br>b) contribute to the continual improvement of prevention, protection and operational response activities, at both local and national level; and<br>c) contribute to and support national fire safety campaigns |  |  |
| 3                         | Collate and analyse information gathered during fire investigation work and be able to present it to a variety of interested parties, in a timely manner  |  |  |
| 4                         | Ensure all information gathered is quality assured  |  |  |
| 5                         | Undertake workforce planning, including succession planning, to clarify the resources required to maintain a fire investigation   |  |  |

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|  | capability equipped to conduct effective fire investigations and associated work   |  |  |
| 6  | Collaborate with other fire and rescue services and interested parties to deliver fire investigation activities in the most efficient, effective and valid way possible  |  |  |
| 7  | Recruit, train, develop and maintain a competent and professional fire investigation workforce by:<br>a) aligning to the NFCC Fire Investigation Competency Framework;<br>b) embedding the appropriate codes of practice and conduct into local policies, procedures, tailored guidance, and training materials; and<br>c) recording and monitoring competence   |  |  |
| 8  | Provide ongoing training and sufficient support during working hours that encourages and enables its fire investigators to:<br>a) maintain competence appropriate to their role;<br>b) maintain compliance with appropriate legislation, codes of practice and conduct relating to fire investigation and forensic guidance;<br>c) undertake role related administrative duties and reporting obligations associated with the role; and<br>d) maintain continuous professional development |  |  |
| 9  | Where it carries out Tier 2 fire investigations and its fire investigators prepare and present evidence for the justice systems, it:<br>a) provides specialist training to fire investigation employees to enable them to effectively present their evidence in a range of court environments; and<br>b) ensures fire investigation employees remain compliant with the relevant legislation and codes of practice   |  |  |
| 10                                       | Supply the appropriate equipment for fire investigators to effectively carry out their role  |  |  |
| 11                                       | Provide post-incident mental and physical health and wellbeing support to its fire investigators   |  |  |
| 12                                       | Demonstrate inclusivity by recognising the diversity of its community and providing equality of access to fire investigation services  |  |  |
| 13                                       | Demonstrate how it monitors and evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of its fire investigation activities  |  |  |
| 14                                       | Generate a culture which embraces national and organisational learning, allowing it to identify and capture feedback from a range of sources; evaluate, share and act upon this feedback to drive innovation, continuous improvement and enhance future performance  |  |  |
| <b>EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS RESILIENCE</b> |  |  |  |
| 1  | Align to all relevant Cabinet Office National Resilience Standards for Local Resilience Forums (LRFs)  |  |  |
| 2ab                                      | Have plans that enable it to prepare for emergencies and take preventative or pre-emptive actions as required, and that:<br>a) are based on a robust risk assessment of foreseeable risks to the local area, informed by the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA) and its Community Risk Registers;<br>b) contain supporting materials which reflect and embed Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Principles (JESIP);  |  |  |

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| 2cd  | <p>c) align to other multi-agency plans, and where relevant meet legislative requirements. These plans may include those for Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH), Pipeline Safety Regulations (PSR) and Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations (REPPiR);</p> <p>d) have a clear activation and notification process for communicating with other Category 1 and 2 responders, organisations and the public, to enhance cross-border awareness and interoperability for preparedness, response and recovery arrangements;</p> |  |  |
| 2ef  | <p>e) have robust, embedded and flexible recovery management arrangements in place as detailed in the Local Recovery Management National Resilience Standard #13;</p> <p>f) contain protocols aligned with the LRF protocols and guidance for leaders and practitioners about the establishment of recovery and coordination groups (RCGs) and managing activity between phases from response, recovery and to stand down;</p>  |  |  |
| 2gh  | <p>g) have clear, inclusive and agreed governance arrangements for both single-service and national resilience capabilities in line with the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF), including defined roles and responsibilities;</p> <p>h) evidence assurance of its resilience capabilities, validated by regular testing using a risk-based exercise programme, either as a single service or with other relevant responder organisations at operational, tactical and strategic levels;</p>   |  |  |
| 2lj  | <p>i) are reviewed and updated periodically with relevant partners; and</p> <p>j) are classified in line with the Government Security Classifications dependent upon the nature of the plan and exist in a format that makes them accessible to relevant stakeholders when required.</p>  |  |  |
| 3    | Collaborate with partners to develop site-specific emergency plans which are based on a shared and common understanding of local risks, associated planning assumptions and the NSRA;   |  |  |
| 4    | Recruit, train, develop and maintain a competent and professional workforce to enable the service to carry out its role in preparedness, response and recovery to emergencies;  |  |  |
| 5    | Have access to a suitable and secure system to enable it to share and make information available and accessible to partners and stakeholders, when required;  |  |  |
| 6ab  | <p>Have business continuity plans (BCP) in place relating to all critical functions, that:</p> <p>a) demonstrate a clear procedure for invoking the BCP and set out the core of a response to emergencies; and</p> <p>b) are reviewed and exercised periodically</p>  |  |  |
| 7    | As part of the response to an emergency contribute to the effective operation of a Strategic Co-ordination Centre (SCC) and Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) and in line with National Resilience Standards #11 and #12.   |  |  |
| 8    | <p><b>To achieve this Fire Standard, a fire and rescue service should:</b></p> <p>Evidence a clear rationale for the balance between generic and site-specific emergency planning for defined risks;</p>  |  |  |
| 9    | Adopt the principles of integrated emergency management to effectively anticipate and assess risks and prevent, prepare, respond and recover from emergencies;  |  |  |
| 10ab | <p>Develop plans which:</p> <p>a) follow a common template, including use of action cards, diagrammatic instructions, detachable annexes and directories; and</p> <p>b) include an escalation process to request additional involvement and support, such as mutual aid and national resilience capabilities.</p>   |  |  |

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| 11                     | Optimise the opportunity to gather learning, such as debrief outcomes following emergency response, training or exercising and share them on the available systems, such as Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) and National Operational Learning (NOL);   |  |  |
| 12                     | Have a process in place to act on any learning received from systems such as JOL and NOL to drive innovation and continuous improvement and enhance future performance;  |  |  |
| 13                     | Maximise opportunities gained from supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) network by sharing learning and experiences, collaborating with others and contributing to the continual improvement of preparedness, response and recovery activities;  |  |  |
| 14                     | Contribute and support appropriate national campaigns and initiatives, where resources are available.  |  |  |
| 15                     | <b>To achieve this Fire Standard, a fire and rescue service may:</b><br>Share plans with other services or partners for independent peer review for continual improvement purposes.  |  |  |
| <b>DATA MANAGEMENT</b> |  |  |  |
| 1abc                   | Have a data governance framework or equivalent in place, and policies and procedures that includes, but is not limited to the following content:<br>a) collection<br>b) management<br>c) storage and retrieval   |  |  |
| 1def                   | d) disposal<br>e) security<br>f) protection  |  |  |
| 1ghij                  | g) publishing<br>h) ethics<br>i) sharing<br>j) quality and assurance audit   |  |  |
| 2                      | Understand its data-related organisational risks and put in place controls to manage them  |  |  |
| 3                      | Designate a senior leader who is responsible and accountable for developing and enacting the strategic approach to data management, within the service;  |  |  |
| 4                      | Have a nominated data owner(s), accountable for the quality, integrity, and protection of data and who are responsible for maintaining an accurate and complete information asset register;  |  |  |
| 5                      | Collaborate and partner with others, as and when appropriate;  |  |  |
| 6                      | Create a level of data literacy across the organisation, enabling employees to access and use data proportionate to their role;  |  |  |
| 7abc                   | Have tools and systems in place that enable it to collect, interpret and analyse data, converting that data into meaningful business intelligence, to allow it to:<br>a) make data available and in an accessible format to those who need it, both internally and externally;<br>b) inform the development and maintenance of its community risk management plan;<br>c) remain compliant with legislation and recognised data standards for the public sector |  |  |
| 7def                   | d) provide national reporting and data submissions in line with government requirements and national data definitions, as and when they become available;<br>e) operate and use its resources effectively;   |  |  |

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|                                      | f) identify improvements to existing practices or to inform new ways of working;   |  |  |
| 7ghi                                 | g) have effective business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements and processes;<br>h) extract learning and identify trends or significant findings that might impact service delivery or the public directly and feed them into local, regional and national organisational learning arrangements and systems; and<br>i) escalate issues locally, regionally or nationally, as and when required.  |  |  |
| 8abc                                 | Recruit, train, develop and maintain a competent and technical data capability to enable it to interpret, analyse and exploit data, in line with its governance framework by:<br>a) ensuring those that provide the data capability have relevant skills, knowledge and experience in line with NFCC and other data related competency frameworks;<br>b) embedding the appropriate ethical codes of practice and conduct into local policies, procedures, tailored guidance, and training materials; and<br>c) record and monitor the competence of those who work with data and who are directly employed by the service, and support their continued professional development. |  |  |
| 9                                    | Present data and intelligence in a way that is meaningful for the intended audience;   |  |  |
| 10                                   | Establish data sharing arrangements or agreements where beneficial to the community, to the service and others   |  |  |
| 11                                   | Unlock improved and accessible ways of working and embrace innovation by:<br>a) maximising opportunities gained from supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) network by sharing learning and experiences;<br>b) identifying and accessing data outside of the service, which may enhance and contribute to continual improvement of service delivery; and<br>c) staying informed of innovations in data technologies and trends.  |  |  |
| 12                                   | Explore opportunities to enhance its technical data capability by utilising advanced analytical techniques.  |  |  |
| <b>LEADING AND DEVELOPING PEOPLE</b> |  |  |  |
| 1a                                   | Carry out robust workforce planning to:<br>deliver its strategic planning objectives to manage risks and respond to incidents within its community and regional and national emergencies;  |  |  |
| 1b                                   | develop, nurture and manage talent at all levels in line with its strategic objectives and current and future needs;   |  |  |
| 1c                                   | understand and build its capabilities, considering internal and external options in order to utilise its resources effectively and flexibly;   |  |  |
| 1d                                   | have in place necessary succession plans and processes to maintain a sustainable, competent workforce  |  |  |
| 2a-h                                 | Have in place systems, policies and processes in regard to:<br>a. employment legislation;<br>b. effective recruitment, induction, ongoing development and training of their employees and volunteers;  |  |  |

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|       | c. the monitoring and management of employee and volunteer performance and competence;<br>d. open and regular communications between leaders, employees, partners and stakeholders;<br>e. fair, transparent and inclusive people and performance management practices;<br>f. employees or volunteers exiting the organisation;<br>g. the evaluation of workforce delivery; and<br>h. positive employment relations              |  |  |
| 3     | Attract and maintain a competent and diverse workforce that can meet community and organisational needs   |  |  |
| 4     | Develop and implement a variety of entry routes into the service to attract and recruit a diverse and professional workforce to meet its identified workforce requirements  |  |  |
| 5a-e  | Have in place:<br>a. transparent, consistent and agreed selection processes and criteria for recruitment, promotion and transfers;<br>b. standardised job descriptions and competencies;<br>c. standardised contracts and terms of employment; and<br>d. induction programmes for all those entering the service<br>e. arrangements to complete relevant background employment checks on each employee, applicant, or candidate |  |  |
| 6     | Train and develop employees, including leaders, so they are competent in their respective roles   |  |  |
| 7     | Provide continual professional development to employees, including leaders, so competency is maintained and developed   |  |  |
| 8     | Monitor and manage employee performance and competency  |  |  |
| 9     | Identify, encourage and nurture talent, providing career pathways for all   |  |  |
| 10    | Nurture, develop and prepare leaders as they progress within the organisation   |  |  |
| 11    | Identify support in an inclusive way to meet the diverse needs of individuals, including coaching and mentoring, employee assistance programs and occupational health   |  |  |
| 12    | Have a defined approach to organisational learning so that the service continually evaluates its own performance to improve its internal ways of working and the service it provides to the public  |  |  |
| 13a-c | Have performance management processes in place to effectively manage and learn from:<br>a. appraisals,<br>b. grievances, complaints and disciplinary procedures;<br>c. competence achievement and maintenance.  |  |  |
| 14    | Embed the principles of inclusivity, belonging and equality of access within all formal and informal people processes   |  |  |
| 15    | Ensure all those who work for and on behalf of the service embody and actively promote the behaviours set out in the Core Code of Ethics, ensuring the principles are embedded into its decision-making processes, local policies, and procedures   |  |  |
| 16a   | Have leaders that:<br>role model behaviours set out in the NFCC Leadership Framework and other professional behavioural frameworks;   |  |  |
| 16b   | challenge and act upon inappropriate behaviour;   |  |  |
| 16c   | consistently use a communication style that is inclusive and meets the needs of their differing audiences;  |  |  |



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| 16d                        | are able to adapt their leadership style; are authentic and recognise and value the differences in people and circumstances in order to build trust;   |  |  |
| 16e                        | invest in their own development, and that of others, to keep up with changing horizons and priorities;   |  |  |
| 16f                        | recognise the impact of change and support employees through the change process, managing those people to achieve the required outcome;  |  |  |
| 16g                        | demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence, particularly self-awareness;  |  |  |
| 16h                        | value contributions made by their people; and  |  |  |
| 16i                        | empower employees to operate flexibly within their role, to make decisions and deliver objectives in their own leadership styles   |  |  |
| 17                         | Have in place or access to mechanisms which enable feedback from employees to be captured and responded to   |  |  |
| 18                         | Review continuous improvement processes to ensure objectives are being achieved  |  |  |
| 19a                        | Have in place:<br>health and wellbeing policies and support which are inclusive, actively and widely promoted and embedded;  |  |  |
| 19b                        | health and safety policies and processes to ensure a safe working environment, in line with relevant legislation;  |  |  |
| 19c                        | provide clear support and advice for employees in relation to employment, leaving the service and welfare matters;   |  |  |
| 19d                        | employee engagement policies and procedures, providing a clear and transparent route in highlighting organisational concerns, improvements and ideas in an open and inclusive environment. Leaders will then act appropriately and proportionately with the items raised and share any learning, changes or actions back into the service; and |  |  |
| 19e                        | a recognition scheme that motivates, engages and encourages positive behaviours amongst employees  |  |  |
| 20                         | <b>A fire and rescue service should:</b><br>Deliver training and provide peer support through working collaboratively with others, where appropriate   |  |  |
| 21                         | Utilise centrally developed tools to support local workforce management and development  |  |  |
| 22                         | Contribute to NFCC networks and support national campaigns and initiatives, where appropriate and where resources are available  |  |  |
| <b>LEADING THE SERVICE</b> |  |  |  |
| 1                          | Make clear the vision and strategic objectives for the service, which are available to and understood by all   |  |  |
| 2a-d                       | Evaluate and continually improve what they do and how they do it for the benefit of the public and the service by:<br>a. looking forward, enabling it to identify emerging opportunities, challenges, risks and developments;  |  |  |



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|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. exploring opportunities to evolve and improve ways of working through innovative thinking and action;</li> <li>c. coordinating their organisational development through integrating their functional improvement and change action plans to inform strategic planning; and</li> <li>d. maximising opportunities to learn and innovate either from within or through collaboration with others.</li> </ul>   |  |  |
| 3a   | <p>Carry out strategic planning activities so that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. understands its local risk profile and considers and puts in place appropriate mitigations to be able to respond to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the risks faced by, and incidents in, its local community; and</li> <li>ii. local, regional and national scale emergencies, working as a single service or collaboratively with partners or as part of a multi-agency response</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |  |  |
| 3b   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. undertakes robust workforce planning to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. understand its capabilities so that it can deploy its resources effectively;</li> <li>ii. identify and manage potential and talent; and</li> <li>iii. attract and maintain a competent and diverse workforce</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |  |  |
| 3c   | c. remains financially viable, sustainable and delivers value for money for its community;  |  |  |
| 3d   | d. identifies, understands and manages its corporate risks;   |  |  |
| 3e   | e. can understand its environmental impacts and put actions in place to reduce or mitigate them, or both;   |  |  |
| 3f   | f. has appropriate business continuity plans in place so that it is resilient and able to function during times of disruption;  |  |  |
| 3g   | g. maintains adequate technology to support the service;  |  |  |
| 3h   | h. identifies and collects the right data to support effective and informed decision making, in a timely manner;  |  |  |
| 3i   | i. supports good governance, assigning clear responsibilities, roles and accountabilities and provides assurance about its organisational performance   |  |  |
| 4    | Have a strategic approach to communication, engagement and consultation which includes clear principles about how the organisation will communicate with its audiences, linked to the values of the service and the Code of Ethics Fire Standard  |  |  |
| 5a-l | <p>Put controls and processes in place so that it can effectively monitor and manage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. finances;</li> <li>b. commercial activities and procurement;</li> <li>c. corporate risks;</li> <li>d. resources and capability;</li> <li>e. organisational performance;</li> <li>f. compliance with legislation and statutory responsibilities;</li> <li>g. communication, engagement and consultation;</li> <li>h. talent management, organisational development, and change; and</li> <li>i. disciplinarys, grievances, complaints, staff disclosures and whistle blowing.</li> </ul> |  |  |
| 6    | Have provision for accessing legal and other specialist advice to inform the day-to-day operation of the service  |  |  |
| 7a   | <p>Have leaders at all levels that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. are accountable for the success of their service in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. delivering its vision and strategic objectives;</li> <li>ii. complying with legislation, statutory requirements and industry standards;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |  |  |

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|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. aligning their service to the Fire Standards and any other relevant professional standards; and</li> <li>iv. upholding and enhancing the high reputation of the service in all they do.</li> </ul>  |  |  |
| 7b  | b. are politically aware, open to scrutiny and understand both the national and local challenges facing their service and others;   |  |  |
| 7c  | c. are open-minded, open to learning and actively monitor the environment they operate in to enable them to work with agility and foresight   |  |  |
| 7d  | d. embody, role model and actively promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. an environment that creates and maintains trust throughout the service;</li> <li>ii. the leadership behaviours set out in the NFCC Leadership Framework; and</li> <li>iii. the ethical behaviours set out in the Core Code of Ethics.</li> </ul>  |  |  |
| 7e  | e. relate to others effectively and constructively because of their emotional intelligence;   |  |  |
| 7f  | f. demonstrate and encourage in others excellent communication skills, welcoming feedback from all  |  |  |
| 7g  | g. use their effective influencing skills to develop and maintain positive and constructive relationships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. staff representative bodies to develop and foster a positive industrial relations climate that builds trust and facilitates change; and</li> <li>ii. partners and stakeholders to deliver excellence to the community.</li> </ul> |  |  |
| 7h  | h. are technologically and data literate, who understand the importance of data and how to interpret it to support their planning and decision making   |  |  |
| 8   | Have a defined approach to organisational learning so that the service continually evaluates its own performance to improve its internal ways of working and the service it provides to the public  |  |  |
| 9   | Provide comprehensive, accurate and data driven reporting   |  |  |
| 10a | Consider its approach to organisational learning by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. continuously evaluating its performance to ensure it remains efficient, effective and compliant with legislation and standards;</li> </ul>   |  |  |
| 10b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. identifying, capturing, evaluating and sharing learning which could benefit itself and others, engaging with national learning arrangements, where they exist;</li> </ul>   |  |  |
| 10c | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. have in place or access to mechanisms which enable feedback from the community to be captured and responded to;</li> </ul>  |  |  |
| 10d | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. have in place or access to mechanisms which enable feedback from employees to be captured and responded to; and</li> </ul>  |  |  |

|                     |   |  |  |
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| 10e                 | e. using identified learning to tailor and improve what it delivers to the community  |  |  |
| 11                  | Recognise when it may need support and draw on the appropriate networks, national guidance and tools to support its own organisational development  |  |  |
| 12                  | Maximise opportunities gained from supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) network by sharing learning and experiences, collaborating with others and contributing to the continual improvement of the service   |  |  |
| 13                  | Engage regionally and nationally with peers, partners and stakeholders, collaborating where appropriate.  |  |  |
| <b>FIRE CONTROL</b> |   |  |  |
| 1                   | Include fire control managers in its community risk management and strategic planning;  |  |  |
| 2a                  | As part of their community risk management, strategic and workforce planning, consider the resources they need to provide a resilient fire control, including:<br>a. the number of fire control employees required for the safe and effective command and operation of fire control;                            |  |  |
| 2b                  | As part of their community risk management, strategic and workforce planning, consider the resources they need to provide a resilient fire control, including:<br>b. the role and level of the fire control commander;  |  |  |
| 2c                  | As part of their community risk management, strategic and workforce planning, consider the resources they need to provide a resilient fire control, including:<br>c. an effective fire control management structure that takes into account the leadership and ongoing development of its fire control function |  |  |
| 3                   | Base fire control policies, procedures and tailored guidance on National Operational Guidance, unless by exception its content is not relevant to the service   |  |  |
|                     | Include fire control managers in its community risk management and strategic planning;  |  |  |
| 4                   | Embed JESIP principles into policies, procedures, training and exercising to support interoperability and multi-agency working;   |  |  |
| 5                   | Embed national resilience arrangements into policies, procedures, training and exercising to support intraoperability   |  |  |
| 6a                  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>a. Receive and manage emergency calls;  |  |  |
| 6b                  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>b. Identify and record the location of emergency callers and incidents;   |  |  |
| 6c                  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>c. Provide advice and life-saving survival guidance to help people at risk;   |  |  |
| 6d                  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>d. Determine an appropriate response;   |  |  |

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| 6e  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>e. Identify the location, skills and availability of resources;   |  |  |
| 6f  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>f. Mobilise appropriate resources;  |  |  |
| 6g  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>g. Share incident related information with operational employees, other fire controls and other multi-agency organisations;   |  |  |
| 6h  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>h. Increase emergency call management capacity;   |  |  |
| 6i  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>i. Escalate fire control command levels according to operational need;  |  |  |
| 6j  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>j. Record all incident-related actions and decisions;   |  |  |
| 6k  | Provide fire control employees with effective systems and arrangements to:<br>k. Support the ongoing needs of an incident   |  |  |
| 7   | Recruit, train, exercise, develop and maintain a competent and professional fire control workforce;   |  |  |
| 8   | Have in place necessary succession planning and processes to maintain a sustainable competent fire control workforce;   |  |  |
| 9   | Develop a cycle of continuous learning and professional development for fire control employees that considers relevant occupational standards;  |  |  |
| 10  | Have assurance processes in place to ensure that fire control commanders and employees working within its fire control are suitably competent;  |  |  |
| 11a | Establish and regularly test and evaluate robust business continuity plans (BCP) and arrangements relating to critical fire control functions, that:<br>a. plan for the degradation and loss of fire control capabilities, including systems, infrastructure and people |  |  |
| 11b | Establish and regularly test and evaluate robust business continuity plans (BCP) and arrangements relating to critical fire control functions, that:<br>b. provide clear steps for invoking the BCP with assigned responsibilities.                                     |  |  |
| 12  | Provide easily accessible and widely promoted mental and physical health and wellbeing support to its fire control employees;   |  |  |
| 13a | Integrate fire control employees in organisational and multi-agency learning processes, providing opportunities and tools to:<br>a. Share relevant learning;  |  |  |
| 13b | Integrate fire control employees in organisational and multi-agency learning processes, providing opportunities and tools to:<br>b. Receive relevant learning;  |  |  |
| 13c | Integrate fire control employees in organisational and multi-agency learning processes, providing opportunities and tools to:<br>c. Implement improvements by acting on relevant learning.  |  |  |

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|                                     | Should   |  |  |
| 14                                  | Use the training specification component of National Operational Guidance to inform their training needs analysis;   |  |  |
| 15                                  | Stay informed of trends, developments and innovations in mobilising and communications technologies  |  |  |
| <b>COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT</b> |  |  |  |
| 1                                   | Have a strategic approach to communications and engagement, including consultation, which includes clear principles about how the organisation will communicate with its audiences, aligned to organisational goals of the service, its values and the principles contained within the Core Code of Ethics.  |  |  |
| 2                                   | have leaders that support the strategic approach to communications and engagement and are exemplars in good communication behaviours and principles, aligned to those included in the NFCC Leadership Framework.   |  |  |
| 3                                   | ensure that everyone in the service understands their responsibilities in relation to communications and engagement.   |  |  |
| 4a                                  | have an appropriately resourced and competent communications and engagement capacity that:<br>a. plans for and manages reactive communication issues such as crises and emergencies, working with local resilience partners;   |  |  |
| 4b                                  | b. plans proactive communications internally and externally;   |  |  |
| 4c                                  | c. carries out meaningful engagement exercises and consultations, aligned to the Gunning Principles to inform strategic direction and support decision making processes  |  |  |
| 5                                   | have a resilient out of hours arrangement to handle enquiries and manage communications during crises and emergencies, in line with the requirements of the emergency preparedness and resilience fire standard.   |  |  |
| 6                                   | support, train and develop those working within its communications and engagement capacity (where they are employed within a service) encouraging them to maintain their competency and keep developing their skills, knowledge and new methods of communication through continued professional development. |  |  |
| 7                                   | deliver inclusive and accessible communications, recognising that every workforce, community and group has different and diverse needs.  |  |  |
| 8                                   | evaluate communications and engagement activity to see whether objectives have been met and if there are any lessons that can be learned and shared.   |  |  |
| <b>SHOULD</b>                       |  |  |  |
| 9                                   | involve the most senior communications professional in their service in discussions with the leadership team about matters affecting the organisation to ensure communications and engagement aspects are always considered.   |  |  |
| 10                                  | ensure all departments liaise with and take advice from the communications and engagement functions as early as possible, when requiring any communications or engagement activity.  |  |  |
| 11                                  | use an established and consistent communications planning framework for communications and campaign work.  |  |  |

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|-----|---|--|--|
| 12  | place an emphasis on stakeholder relationships and management, mapping and analysing key stakeholders, prioritising audiences and managing influencers.   |  |  |
| 13  | use established behavioural science methods to develop interventions and influence positive behaviour change.   |  |  |
| 14  | use audience insight to inform and tailor communications and engagement activities, clearly defining and targeting audiences.   |  |  |
| 15  | have a collaborative approach to communications and engagement both within the service and with partners and stakeholders.  |  |  |
| 16  | seek to build effective relationships with relevant media outlets, proactively and collectively planning stories, building mutual understanding and exchanging feedback about proactive and reactive stories. |  |  |
| 17  | stay well informed of new communications and engagement methods and techniques, applying them where appropriate.  |  |  |
| MAY |   |  |  |
| 18  | enhance its engagement approach by partnering with key stakeholders to co-design service delivery to best meet community needs.   |  |  |
| 19  | Professionalise the communications and engagement functions by investing in their continued professional development through membership of a recognised professional body                                     |  |  |

## **Fire Standards Board**

### **Fire Standards Review 2023-24**

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## Foreword

### Independent Chair and Vice Chair of the Fire Standard Board

We are pleased to present the 2023/24 Fire Standards Board Review which highlights the Board's work and achievements over that period and looks forward to 2024/25.

As independent Chairs of the Board, we have had the privilege of working with the sector and its stakeholders. England's Fire and Rescue Service has a vital role in keeping communities safe, and we are honoured to play a part in helping the Service achieve a better outcome for the public through the creation of a suite of Fire Standards. Importantly, the Board has seen the value throughout of being actively consultative in its approach to developing the Fire Standards. Simply said, they have been created by the Service for the Service.

As explained in this review, we anticipate that the initial suite of Fire Standards will be published by the end of the second quarter of 2024, although other areas may emerge where a Standard may be required. This review underlines that, as we entered the final phase of creating the initial suite, this is not the end of the Board's work. Our attention now shifts more towards enhanced communication and engagement with services to ensure full and consistent implementation of the Standards and assessment of their benefits. It is also time to begin reviewing the published Standards to confirm they remain both current and relevant.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have been involved in developing and implementing the Standards. We would particularly wish to make known our appreciation for the work done by those who have recently left the Board - Councillor Nick Chard, who represented the Local Government Association, and Jonny Bugg, who represented the Home Office. Both contributed greatly. The Board would also like to recognise the invaluable contributions of Joy Flanagan and Paul Henbest who both left the Fire Standards Team at the end of 2023.



Suzanne McCarthy



Alison Sansome

Independent Chair and Vice Chair, Fire Standards Board

March 2024

## The Fire Standards Board

In May 2016 the then Home Secretary, Theresa May, announced an ambitious fire reform programme aimed at making England's fire and rescue services more effective, professional, and accountable.

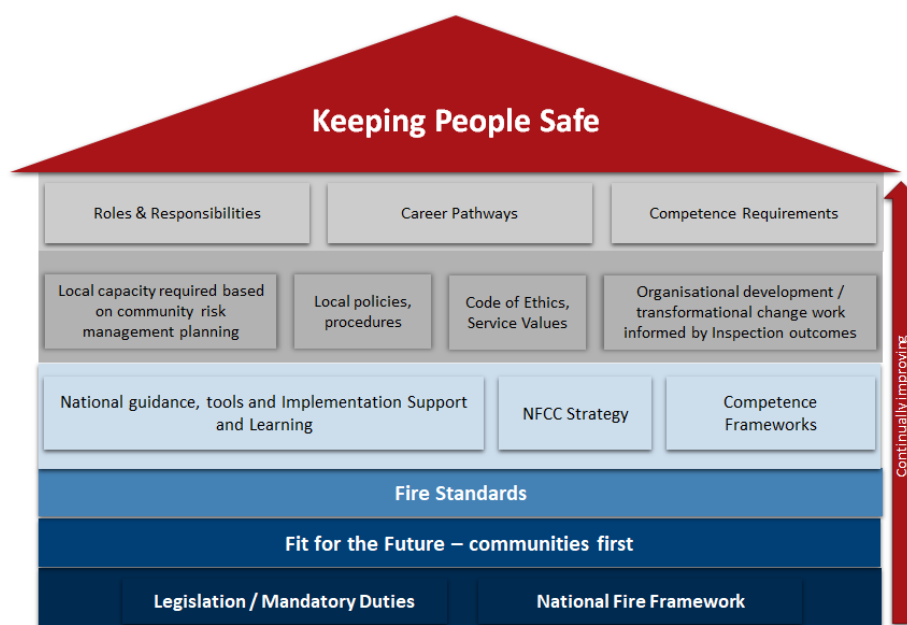
Included in this agenda together with the establishment of an inspection regime led by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) was the creation of the independent Fire Standards Board. This body was tasked with developing a coherent and comprehensive set of professional standards for the Service. It was given the role to oversee the identification, development, and maintenance of professional standards for the benefit of the profession, the services and the public served by them. It began operating in 2019, and, following the work necessary to identify what areas of service activity required standards and the process for producing them, the first Standards were published in February 2021.

The Board's composition reflects its major stakeholders. In addition to the independent Chair and Vice-Chair, the Board includes the Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC); a representative each from the Local Government Association (LGA); the Association of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (APCC); and the Home Office. All who attend do so as representatives not delegates. The list of 2023/24 Board members is at Annex A: Fire Standards Board Membership.

The NFCC provides both the Board's executive support, led by the Fire Standards Team, and access to subject matter experts who lead on developing the different Standards. As neither the Fire Standards Board nor the Inspectorate are regulators, the responsibility for making sure that Standards are implemented and their benefits achieved falls to the services themselves and their employers, who are represented on the Board by the LGA and the APCC.

The following "house" pictorial shows how the Standards together with other elements contribute to achieving better outcomes for the public.

## Fitting it all together



As the pictorial illustrates, the sector's foundation is based on legislation and the National Fire Framework. The house is built layer by layer reflecting the aspirations of Fire and Rescue Services as outlined in the document, "Fit for the Future", which was published jointly by NFCC, the LGA and Employers England. The Fire Standards state what good looks like for Fire and Rescue Services and actions required to achieve it. Providing further supporting information on the Fire Standards are NFCC products, guidance and tools to help Services achieve the Standards and thus meet the Fit for the Future aspirations. The top two layers of the house represent staff and local communities.

## Fire Standards Board and the Inspectorate

The Inspectorate and the Fire Standards Board have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which reflects their different roles and collaborative relationship. The Inspectorate does not audit the Standards, but in inspecting and reporting on the performance of the different Fire and Rescue Services will reference the Fire Standards, as appropriate. It is unfortunate that the Standards, HMICFRS inspections, and the associated inspection framework are sometimes seen as distinct and different activities with competing pressures for their resources, rather than complementary strands with shared aims for improvement. The Inspectorate has stated that services working to achieve the Standards are more likely to see improved inspection outcomes and we welcome this being increasingly reflected in inspection findings. The Fire Standard Board strongly believes that services should consider their improvement action plans holistically as it is likely the improvements required to achieve the outcomes of a Fire Standard may well correlate to areas for improvement identified through inspection.

The Inspectorate will only take into account those standards published at the start of an inspection cycle. Thus, it was important for the Board to have published the two leadership standards, Leading the Service and Leading and Developing People, by the end of December 2022 so that they could be included in the Inspectorate's programme of inspections starting in January 2023. Both Standards were benchmarked against recognised leadership standards, but, as with all Fire Standards, were put into a context suitable for fire and rescue services. The Leading the Service Fire Standard was developed to clearly articulate the expectations of those who lead within services, particularly their behaviours, ethics and the activities required in an ever changing world. The Leading and Developing People Fire Standard concentrates on how services should attract and retain a competent workforce that is diverse, motivated, and engaged. That Standard also puts an emphasis on workforce development, health, and wellbeing. The NFCC Implementation Team has provided significant support in embedding these two Standards within services.

## The Suite of Fire Standards

The development of a Standard is thorough and consultative. Starting with a scoping and planning stage, there then follows development work including peer review leading to the Board agreeing to a public consultation on the draft Standard. Consultation responses received are analysed, with the Fire Standards Team producing a full report for consideration by the Board which explains why proposed changes to the draft have been accepted or rejected. The Board will consider signing off the Standard for publication once it has reviewed and is satisfied both with the final draft Standard and the conclusions of the Quality Assurance Report which is focused on commenting on the Standard's production process, noting any recommendations for possible improvements. Once approved, the Standard is launched with suitable communications together with an accompanying implementation tool. Thereafter information is continually gathered on the Standard's impact. The process from start to finish takes on average six months to a year.

During the year the Board recognised that it was important to publish a statement on its website outlining the Board's position with regards to the level of equality impact assessment undertaken when producing Fire Standards. The statement reads as follows:

"The Fire Standards are designed to be applicable to all fire and rescue services in England and for the wider benefit of local communities. Fire Standards are produced by the services for the services.

The Fire Standards Board is committed to listening and responding to a diversity of voices. Through its open consultation process, it welcomes views and feedback from those with differing backgrounds and experiences about its Fire Standards. With best endeavours, it considers all feedback as part of its development and approval process to ensure the standards will not directly or indirectly discriminate against a person or persons or negatively affect them.

Achieving the Fire Standards will support fire and rescue services in complying with their public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010, in particular that means their responsibility to; eliminate

discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The impact of this will benefit the fire sector and the wider community.”

At the time of this review, 16 Fire Standards have been published, which can be found on the Fire Standards Board website by following this link: <https://www.firestandards.org>. The expectation is that the initial suite will consist of around 20 Standards. The Board decided that several areas were better expressed not as separate Standards, but as cross-cutting themes reflected in the Standards, as appropriate. These cross-cutting themes are identified as: productivity, efficiency and effectiveness; environment and sustainability; equality, diversity, and inclusion; health and wellbeing; and organisational learning.

Standards should not be seen as silo documents as their relationships produce positive synergies needed to achieve improvements. Separately and together, they help drive improved quality of service to support the safety, health, and wellbeing of communities. They act to enhance professionalism through consistent application, improved competence and diminishment in organisational risk. They enable services to collaborate effectively with other services across borders or nationally. They ensure better and greater accountability assisting governing bodies and operational leaders in assessing local performance. The outcome of achieving the Standards is a more positive Service culture and working environment leading to increased public confidence which can only add to maintaining trust in and the upholding of the Service’s reputation.

Recognising that services can have very different demographics and geographies and challenges, the Standards are deliberately written to be principles based. Each begins with an outcome statement which states what good looks like. This is followed by what is required to achieve that outcome, the “how to” section. This directs services to the measures they must, should or may take to achieve the outcome. The Standard’s remaining sections are: expected benefits of achieving the Standard; legal requirements or mandatory duties; linked qualifications, accreditations or Fire Standards; and guidance and supporting information. That material is published separately by NFCC and contains any necessary further details.

Services are encouraged and expected to work towards achieving the Standard’s stated outcome through reflection and self-assessment and by avoiding simply treating Standards as a tick box compliance exercise. The Fire Standards Board anticipates that in many cases services may already be achieving much of what each Standard’s outcome requires, understanding that different services will have specific strengths and weaknesses. Each Fire Standard has a corresponding Gap Analysis Tool to support services with implementation. These tools help services assess how well they currently meet the outcome statement and to identify any additional actions required.

Whilst it is not mandatory for services to adopt the Fire Standards, the National Fire Framework makes clear that services are expected to pay due regard to them.

## Progress and Achievements in 2023/24

In addition to the usual four meetings a year, the Board exceptionally met on two occasions during this period - the first in June to consider the Inspectorate's recommendations mentioned below and then again in September to discuss the need for a specific Finance Standard.

### a) Production of Fire Standards

During the period of this review the Fire Standards Board published two standards and made progress on three others.

The Fire Control Fire Standard and Communication and Engagement Fire Standard were both launched in April 2023. The development of the Fire Control Standard was influenced by major incidents such as Grenfell and the Manchester Arena bombing. It addresses the fundamental and strategic role that Fire Control plays from initially receiving the first contact through to the very close of an incident. This Standard's development drew on the expertise and wide knowledge of Fire Control in all operational service activity including the NFCC Fire Control Team, the NFCC Lead for Fire Control, the Mobilising Officers Group and control specialists from a wide range of Fire and Rescue services. The intention is for this Standard to assist in creating better resilience, greater strategic awareness and interest in Fire Control, improved levels of recruitment and retention and professional development opportunities.

**Since 2021, the NFCC Implementation Support Team has undertaken:**

- Over 670 engagements directly relating to Fire Standards
- Over 430 face-to-face visits and workshops in Services
- 90 multi-service online Fire Standard implementation workshops
- Reached over 1100 fire service participants representing all 44 English Services

Recognising that accessible, and inclusive communication and engagement are fundamental in building a positive working environment and culture and key in keeping communities safe, the Communication and Engagement Fire Standard clarifies the importance of these areas in all aspects of a fire and rescue service. It aims to ensure fire and rescue services have defined approaches on how to strategically communicate to all stakeholders, both internally and externally. FirePRO, the membership body for communications professionals working in fire and rescue, developed the Standard on behalf of the Board, engaging with industry leaders both from the Chartered Institute for Public Relations and the Local Government Association.

During the year progress was also made on the production of several other Standards as described below.

While a Finance Standard was originally envisaged, advice given to the Board by both NFCC Finance Leads and the Home Office, made it reconsider if such a Standard was required. This led to its decision to commission instead the development of an Internal Governance and Assurance Fire Standard. This Standard is expected to be published at the beginning of 2024/25. The Board is considering whether and how to include certain financial elements in some already existing Standards.

Considering comments received on a proposed Procurement and Asset Management Fire Standard and subsequent discussions with interested stakeholders, it was decided that this Standard needed more clarity and focus. As a result, the content has been reconsidered and the Standard repositioned as the Procurement and Commercial Standard. The time needed for these conversations has understandably delayed the start of consultation on this Standard. It is hoped that the Board will be in position to consider approving this Standard sometime in late Spring or early Summer 2024/25.

Work on the provisionally titled Digital and Information Technology Fire Standard was initiated with a working group session to confirm the Standard's scope and to gather any related information to support early drafting work. Again, the Board is expecting to consider approval of this Standard in summer 2024.

#### **b) Responding to HMICFRS' Spotlight Report on Culture and Values' Recommendations**

In March 2023, HMICFRS published its Spotlight Report on Culture and Values. This contained three recommendations directed to the Fire Standards Board which referred to safeguarding measures, staff disclosures, complaints and grievances and misconduct. This led to the Board determining that to meet these recommendations moderate changes were needed to strengthen three Standards - Leading the Service, Leading and Developing People, and Safeguarding. The necessary changes were made by including additional guidance and supporting information, linked qualifications, and, in the case of the Safeguarding Fire Standard, additional material to reflect changes in primary legislation. The revised Standards are published on the Fire Standards Board website.

#### **c) Working with Services and Stakeholders**

The Fire Standards Board engaged with the Home Office's *"Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service: Building professionalism, boosting performance and strengthening governance"* white paper and considered the subsequent response provided by the Home Office to that consultation.

Considering how much focus is now on improving values and culture in the Fire and Rescue Service, the Fire Standards Board and the NFCC's Implementation Team have worked to focus the particular

attention of services on delivery of four specific Standards - Leading the Service, Leading and Developing People, the Code of Ethics Standard, and the Safeguarding Standard.

Further, during the period of this review the Fire Standard's website was updated and a number of new [short videos](#) were published featuring Fire Standard Board members explaining how the bodies they represent on the Board contribute to developing and delivering the Standards. A list of service visits and other events attended by the Chairs of the Fire Standards Board in 2023/24 aimed at increasing awareness of the Fire Standards and the work of the Board is at [Annex B](#).



*"An enormous thank you from me for Friday. It was excellent to see the idea for an event we had some months ago brought to life. Thank you for your facilitation, advice, guidance and support. It all goes a very long way in our continued efforts to bring Fire Standards to life across our Service and help everyone understand the value working towards them will achieve. I was so pleased there was good representation from our Regional colleagues, and this is something we can definitely build on and strengthen in the future.*

*The NFCC Implementation Team is without doubt a valuable resource for Services and I'm keen to continue to strengthen our collaborative working approach as much as possible over coming months."*

*Tracy King  
Assistant Director, Performance and Improvement  
HMICFRS – Service Liaison Officer  
Essex Fire and Rescue Service*

## Future Plans

If the production of Standards mentioned above proceeds as expected, it is anticipated that the initial suite of Standards will be completed during 2024/25. In addition, the Fire Standards Board has three priorities for the coming year. First, to begin its scheduled review of published standards to ensure they remain relevant and current. Second, to concentrate through enhanced communications and engagement the successful incorporation of the Standards and gain insight into the benefits for services by their implementation. It is apparent from feedback that whilst some services are making excellent progress towards achieving the Fire Standards, there is more to do in supporting services in achieving this. Third, to be sensitive to the possibility that there may be other areas where Standards might be beneficial.

## How to find out more

You can find out about all the activities of the Fire Standards Board through the following channels [www.firestandards.org](http://www.firestandards.org), [twitter.com/FireStandards](https://twitter.com/FireStandards) and [linkedin](https://www.linkedin.com/company/firestandards).

Fire Standards Board

March 2024.



## **Annex A: Fire Standards Board Membership**

The Board has a Chair and Vice Chair, both independent from Government and fire and rescue.

The membership of the Fire Standards Board is as follows:

- Suzanne McCarthy, Independent Chair
- Alison Sansome, Independent Vice-Chair
- Ben Adams, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire, representing Association of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners
- Yvette Bosworth and Suzie Daykin, Home Office
- Greg Brackenridge, Local Government Association
- Mark Hardingham, National Fire Chiefs Council

## **Annex B: Stakeholder Engagement**

The following list shows service visits and other events attended by the Chairs of the Fire Standards Board in 2023/24:

- Service visit to Cornwall FRS - May 2023
- Service visit to Essex FRS - June
- LGA Fire Commissioners meeting - June
- Meeting with Andy Cooke and Roy Wilshire- June
- Meeting with Nick Ross, Chair of the NFCC Trustees - June
- Meeting with Roy Wilshire - July
- Emergency Services Show - September
- Meeting with the Fire Minister - September
- NFCC Autumn Conference – October
- Meeting with Alex Norris Shadow Fire Minister - October
- Service visit South Yorkshire FRS- October
- Humberside FRS- October
- HMICFRS Chief and Chairs Event – November
- HMICFRS Staff Event - November
- Service visit - Leicestershire FRS – November
- Meeting Roy Wilsher HMICFRS – December
- Meeting Alix Barlett HMICFRS – December
- Excellence in Fire Awards Lunch - December
- LGA Fire Conference – March 2024

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| MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY |                                |                |            |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| MEETING OF THE:                      | AUTHORITY                      |                |            |
| DATE:                                | 16 MAY 2024                    | REPORT NO:     | CFO/26/24  |
| PRESENTING OFFICER                   | MONITORING OFFICER RIA GROVES  |                |            |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:                 | RIA GROVES                     | REPORT AUTHOR: | RIA GROVES |
| OFFICERS CONSULTED:                  | STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM      |                |            |
| TITLE OF REPORT:                     | OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY 2023-2024 |                |            |

|             |            |                                      |
|-------------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| APPENDICES: | APPENDIX A | SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PLAN 2023-2025 |
|-------------|------------|--------------------------------------|

## Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with an update of the progress made during this municipal year 2023/2024 by the Scrutiny Committee with topics on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan.

## Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note the continued work of the Scrutiny Committee throughout 2023/24 and the matters considered from the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan.

## Introduction and Background

3. The Scrutiny Forward Work Plan was created as a result of Members of the Scrutiny Committee attending a scrutiny workshop presented by Officers across the organisation. Due to the number of items Members wanted to review and scrutinise further, a two-year Scrutiny Forward Work Plan was proposed.
4. Members will recall the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan was approved by the Authority at the meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023, a copy of which is contained in Appendix A.
5. This report details those items from the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan which were presented and considered by the Scrutiny Committee throughout this municipal year.

## Health, Safety & Welfare Annual Report 2022/23

6. The Scrutiny Committee considered the report and presentation by Group Manager Craig Whitfield on the Health, Safety & Welfare Annual Report 2022/23 which is a retrospective overview of the Authority's performance for the previous year. The report and accompanying presentation set out the background on what data was collated through the year with a focus on injuries at work, road traffic collisions, the near miss reporting and culture, as well as any significant changes on these issues pre and post Covid to understand the impact thereof. Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on all areas of the report and Members expressed their gratitude in receiving the report, noting how easy it was to read, in particular due to the volume of data contained therein.
7. It was resolved that the performance outcomes against the health, safety and welfare targets of the Authority for 2022/23 had been scrutinised. As a result of information shared with Members in relation to road traffic collisions and low speed collisions, it was also agreed leaflets on parking were to be shared with the Authority Members and a leaflet drop on busy streets was to be considered.

## The Environment and the Impact on Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service's Operational Response - Wildfire Specialism

8. The Scrutiny Committee considered the report and presentation submitted by Station Manager John Kellaway as a National Wildfire Tactical Advisor. The presentation provided an in-depth description of wildfires and their causes. It was agreed that the introduction of the Wildfire Specialism into Operational Response capabilities of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service be noted, and an update be brought back to Members in 12 months' time on any developments and further engagement with stakeholders.

## Staff Sickness Absence

9. The Scrutiny Committee considered the report and accompanying presentation on staff sickness absence for the last three years as presented by Nick Mernock, Director of People, Organisational Development Legal and Democratic Services and Kelly Patterson, Health and Wellbeing Manager & Psychotherapist. As a result of the report and accompanying presentation, Members agreed a Task and Finish Group should be established to allow Members to scrutinise this matter in greater detail.
10. Members of the Task and Finish Group were Councillors Paul Tweed, Dave Hanratty, Linda Maloney, Pat Moloney and Ed Lamb. At the initial meeting it was agreed the areas of focus would be musculoskeletal injuries and mental health which were identified as some of the reasons for long term sickness absence. Additional data such as the number of shifts lost, appliance availability and costs to the Service were provided to Members at the subsequent meeting and key officers also attended to provide more detail on the issues. The findings were reported to the next full Scrutiny Committee in April 2024. Amongst other things, the Task and Finish Group had found the work undertaken by Officers to support

staff was of a high standard and wanted this work to continue with the following recommendations being made:

- (a) to promote the health benefits of walking, cycling, and expanding health promotions to also include diabetes;
- (b) to collaborate nationally on any trends or best practices in managing staff sickness absences (including feedback to the National Fire Chiefs Council );
- (c) for Officers to continue to review the mental health and wellbeing support provided to staff;
- (d) for the staff sickness absence data to be included in the health, safety and welfare annual review and;
- (e) to write to the Local Government Association to request a review of the impact of musculoskeletal absences nationally within the sector by collating the relevant data including by reference to age of those affected.

#### Staff Survey

11. The Scrutiny Committee considered the report and accompanying presentation from the Director of Strategy and Performance Deb Appleton and Community Engagement Advisor Michelle Kirk. The report and accompanying presentation set out the response from the previous staff survey held in 2022 and the actions undertaken by Officers as a result of that feedback. Members of the Committee asked questions and/or raised matters on a number of issues on this topic and it was agreed that the content of the report be noted.

#### Employee/Work Life Balance (Hybrid Working)

12. The Scrutiny Committee were presented with a report which was accompanied by a presentation detailing the ongoing trial of hybrid working within the Service. Director of People and Organisational Development Nick Mernock detailed the outcome of consultations with staff on the impact of hybrid working within the workplace. Members asked questions regarding the impact of this trial and it was agreed the report be noted.

#### Scrutiny Forward Work Plan

13. At each meeting the Scrutiny Committee Members considered a report submitted by the Monitoring Officer that sought views on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan and the identification of potential topics for the Committee to review. Members were advised that the document remained 'live' and as such, could be added to, as Members determine as appropriate.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

14. There are no direct equality, diversity and inclusion implications arising out of this report. The topics scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee which may have contained implications relating to equality, diversity and inclusion were detailed within the relevant report presented at that committee meeting.

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**Staff Implications**

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15. There are no direct staffing implications arising out of this report.

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**Legal Implications**

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16. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

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**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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17. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

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**Risk Management and Health Implications**

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18. There are no direct risk management or health and safety implications arising out of this report. The topics scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee which may have contained implications relating to risk management and health implications were detailed within the relevant report presented at that Committee meeting.

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**Environmental Implications**

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19. There are no direct environmental implications arising out of this report. The topics scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee which may have contained implications relating to the environment were detailed within the relevant report presented at that committee meeting.

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**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.*

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20. The continued scrutiny of the service the Authority provides its community ensures greater transparency, accountability and quality to those it aims to serve, protect and keep safe.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**NONE**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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## SCRUTINY FORWARD PLAN 2023-2025

| Item  | DESCRIPTION &TYPE OF ACTION   | DEPARTMENT                                 | Proposed Scrutiny Meeting  |
|---|---|--|--|
| Management of Contaminates  | Scrutiny of the Authority's management of contaminants and hazardous materials.   | Response                                   | TBC  |
| Staff Sickness  | A review of the impact of staff sickness over the last 3 years and how this is managed by MFRA.   | POD  | 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024  |
| Employee work/life balance  | Scrutiny of the Authority's working practices which offer staff a greater work life balance (including hybrid and family friendly policies) and the impact they have for the Authority to become an employer of choice when tackling retention, recruitment and development of staff. | POD  | 25 <sup>th</sup> April 2024  |
| Enforcement and Prosecution Action  | Scrutiny of the Authority's prosecution and enforcement powers and how they are used.   | Protection                                 | 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2025  |
| Culture, Inclusivity and Behaviours   | Scrutiny of how the Authority has progressed in development of culture and inclusivity over the past two years and how it plans to progress it in the future.   | POD  | 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2024  |
| The environment and the impact on MFRS's operational response (broken down into smaller topics through the two years) | A review of how environmental changes and developments are impacting the Authority in terms of wildfires, alternative fuels, the fleet management, pathway to net zero and flooding.  | Response<br>Preparedness<br>Estates<br>SLT | Operational response to Wildfires – 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024<br>Update on Pathway to Net Zero including Fleet Management – 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2025<br>Alternative Fuels - TBC<br>Operational response to flooding - TBC |

| Actions from Staff Survey and Preparation for 2024   | Scrutiny of the actions undertaken from the 2022 Staff Survey and preparation for the staff survey in 2024.  | S&P      | 25th April 2024               |
|--|--|----------|-------------------------------|
| Protections adaptation to new legislation and the response to and actions from the Grenfell Tower and Manchester Enquiry | Scrutiny of the Authority's response to new legislation resulting from Grenfell Tower and the Manchester Enquiry with a focus on the actions arising and how they are implemented. | Response | 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 |

*Standing Items:*

Health and Safety Review

Scrutiny Forward Work Plan



| MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY |  |                |              |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| MEETING OF THE:                      | AUTHORITY                                    |                |              |
| DATE:                                | 16 MAY 2024                                  | REPORT NO:     | CFO/27/24    |
| PRESENTING OFFICER                   | CHIEF FIRE OFFICER PHIL GARRIGAN             |                |              |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:                 | NICK MERNOCK                                 | REPORT AUTHOR: | NICK MERNOCK |
| OFFICERS CONSULTED:                  | MO JOGI<br>MIKE PILKINGTON                   |                |              |
| TITLE OF REPORT:                     | EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2024 - 2027 |                |              |

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| APPENDICES: | APPENDIX A: EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2024-2027 |
|-------------|--|

## Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with the updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, it's key deliverables and explain how it interacts with the other relevant documents.

## Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members:
  - a) note the report contents; and
  - b) approve the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for 2024 - 2027.

## Introduction and Background

3. Members will be aware that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority has a number of strategic documents that guide its actions and responses in relation to Diversity, Culture and Inclusion. These documents are regularly updated to take account of organisational needs, legislative changes, as well as policy development through the NFCC and the HMICFRS.
4. This document is constructed and informed utilising input from our Staff Networks as well as consultation through the Culture and Inclusion Board.
5. The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion ('ED&I') Policy identifies a number of pieces of work that addresses five key objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Create a strong cohesive organisation that is positive to rising to the future challenges we face.
  - **Objective 2:** Ensure that people from diverse communities receive equitable services that meet their needs.
  - **Objective 3:** Reducing fires and other incidents amongst vulnerable people in the protected groups and deprived areas.
  - **Objective 4:** To continue to evolve the Service's cultural competence based on community insight so that all staff can undertake their role recognising the value of difference. This strengthens our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, meaning our staff are well equipped to engage with our diverse communities and are sensitive to their needs.
  - **Objective 5:** To continue to aspire for ED&I excellence; measuring ourselves against best practise and benchmarking tools within the Fire & Rescue Service and other sectors.
6. Those five key objectives are then delivered within the specific action plan, that is enclosed within the report.
  7. MFRS has now established a clear delivery and engagement strategy approach in relation to Diversity, Culture and Inclusion and as Members will be aware this is now incorporated into a number of key documents that support the organisational delivery and comprehensive understanding of all our employees.
  8. The organisation has a number of interrelated documents of which the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan is part of, which are:
    - The People Plan
    - Equality & Diversity Action Plan
    - The workforce Cultural Transformation Action Plan
    - Cultural Dashboard
    - Organisational Values
  9. The organisation has also developed specific plans to deliver our services in relation to external scrutiny which include:
    - HMICFRS Action Plan
    - NFCC Code of Ethics
  10. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan will be regularly reviewed through our internal scrutiny measures and will be a live document that can be amended or enhanced as required in relation to legislative or Policy demand.

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**Equality and Diversity Implications**

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11. An Equality Impact assessment has been completed to ensure no detriment is accrued in relation to delivery of this document.

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**Staff Implications**

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12. This document in conjunction with the other organisational policy documents will ensure that Diversity, Culture and Inclusion is at the forefront of all our people related work, and operational delivery.

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**Legal Implications**

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13. The plan addresses all legislative requirements placed upon the Authority and delivery will comply with internal and national policy.

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**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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14. There are no direct financial implications in the adoption and delivery of this action plan.

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**Risk Management and Health Implications**

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15. None at this time.

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**Environmental Implications**

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16. None at this time.

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**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.*

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17. The work to be completed in the ED&I Action Plan will not only ensure all our employees understand our cultural intentions and direction of travel but allows them to feed into these plans and having a voice that will be listened to.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**NONE**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>MFRA</b>    | <b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority</b>                                      |
| <b>MFRS</b>    | <b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service</b>  |
| <b>NFCC</b>    | <b>National Fire Chiefs Council</b>  |
| <b>HMICFRS</b> | <b>His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire &amp; Rescue Services</b> |

Discussion document for People (Culture & Inclusion) Board



**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) Action Plan  
2024/2027**

***11 High impact areas addressing workforce and service delivery inequalities.***

## **Introduction**

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Action plan 2024- 2027 has been developed to target 10 high impact areas, looking at six key themes addressing workforce and service delivery inequalities while ensuring they align the MFRS Leadership Message and assist with the delivery of our five Equality Objectives for 2024-2027.

The action plan has been developed taking into consideration recommendations from the 2021 ED&I Audit conducted by the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA)/ JS associates, 2023 HMICFRS inspection findings, IFSG Improvement Strategies –Culture, Recruitment Progression & Retention and previous actions agreed as part of our functional plans.

This action plan should be viewed in synergy with the organisations People Plan 2024-27 and also the Workforce Cultural Transformation Action Plan 2024-27

## **Our Objectives**

- Objective 1: Create a strong cohesive organisation that is positive to rising to the future challenges we face.
- Objective 2: Ensure that people from diverse communities receive equitable services that meet their needs.
- Objective 3: Reducing fires and other incidents amongst vulnerable people in the protected groups and deprived areas.
- Objective 4: To continue to evolve the Service's cultural competence based on community insight so that all staff can undertake their role recognising the value of difference. This strengthens our approach to Equality, diversity and inclusion, meaning our staff are well equipped to engage with our diverse communities and are sensitive to their needs.
- Objective 5: To continue to aspire for ED&I excellence; measuring ourselves against bestpractise and benchmarking tools within the Fire & Rescue Service and other sectors.

## **Our Themes**

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Action plan themes are:

- ED&I – Learning and Development
- Inclusive staff voice
- Inclusive Employer
- ED&I and Knowing our communities.
- Inclusive Leadership Development
- ED&I Good Governance and Communications

## **Reporting**

Updates are collated on a bi-monthly basis via one-to-one meetings with the lead officer and the ED&I coordinator and functional updates presented at the Culture and Inclusion Board.



|   |                     |   |  |                              |             |    |  |  |
|---|---------------------|---|--|------------------------------|-------------|----|--|--|
| 3 | <b>Staff Survey</b> | Regular bi-annual and pulse surveys indicate ongoing improvements in the following areas: being proud to work for MFRS, staff who are highly engaged with a strong intent to remain with the Service, a belief that MFRS treats people equitably irrespective of background and strong evidence to suggest staff would recommend MFRS to friends and family as a good place to work | Regular pulse surveys enhance engagement.<br><br>The Service effectively assesses levels of staff engagement.<br><br>Link to the wider work on staff engagement and the Leadership Message | Strategy and Performance/POD | Objective 1 | Q4 |  |  |
|---|---------------------|---|--|------------------------------|-------------|----|--|--|

| Inclusive Employer |   |   |  |   |             |         |  |  |
|--------------------|---|---|--|---|-------------|---------|--|--|
| 4                  | <b>Increase the diversity of our workforce through taking a whole organisation approach through positive action strategy/programmes across all occupations/functions.</b> | Increase the diversity of our workforce through taking a whole organisation approach through positive action strategy/programmes across all occupations/functions.<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Recruitment)             | Promote and deliver through the Positive Action Attractions team support to the various functions to target key communities, recruitment drives to help achieve a more diverse workforce across all levels and across all functions  | POD/Nick Mernock & other functional heads | Objective 1 | Ongoing |  |  |
|                    |   |   | Use, recruitment opportunities such as apprenticeships and cadets to increase diversity in the workforce   | POD/Nick Mernock                          | Objective 1 | Q3      |  |  |
|                    |   | Communication plan in place to ensure staff understand the purpose of positive action and challenge myths, misconceptions & difference in relation to positive discrimination.<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Recruitment) | Develop an internal communications strategy to explain the difference between positive action and positive discrimination to counteract the view of some that an individual has only been employed/promoted because their protected characteristic. This would be supportive to such individuals and be helpful in terms of encouraging progression. | POD/Nick Mernock                          | Objective 1 | Q3      |  |  |
|                    |   | Enhanced understanding of the barriers that underrepresented groups feel they may face working for MFRS.<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Recruitment)   | Commissioning work to identify any obstacles that local communities feel there are to applying to work with the service  | POD/Nick Mernock                          | Objective 1 | Q3 & Q4 |  |  |
|                    |   | Socio economic factors are taken into consideration when addressing recruitment and selection activities but also existing staff and their life journey.  | Promote and advance socio-economic factors through targeting postcodes across the region in terms of recruitment and selection and existing staff.   | POD/Nick Mernock Staff Networks           | Objective 1 | Ongoing |  |  |
|                    |   | Increased diversity across the workforce. Improved access to job roles, and development opportunities for people from underrepresented groups.  | Deliver and reflect on the impact of the High Potential Programme and other interventions to support the diversification of the workforce  | POD/Nick Mernock                          | Objective 1 | Ongoing |  |  |
|                    |   | Visible family friendly policies are in place and reviewed to ensure take up across the organisation.<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Recruitment)<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Progression)                         | Promote, deliver, and reflect on the visible family friendly working policies supported by a greater use of flexible working arrangements.<br><br>Reflect and promote flexible working arrangements at SM level  | POD/Nick Mernock                          | Objective 1 | Ongoing |  |  |
|                    |   | Recruitment policies and practices have in place robust EIAs in place and the use of maturity models ensure diversity is embedded across practices.<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Recruitment)                            | Reflect on recruitment policies and practices to ensure that diversity (in the broadest sense) within services can be positively enhanced by the recruitment process.  | POD/Nick Mernock                          | Objective 1 | Q3 & Q4 |  |  |



|                                |   |   |   |                             |                   |         |  |  |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------|--|--|
|                                |   | Progression policies and practices have an integral consideration for diversity.<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Progression)   | Reflect on progression policies and practices to help secure diversity among successful candidates achieving promotion.   | POD/Nick Mernock            | Objective 1       | Ongoing |  |  |
|                                |   | Promotion processes are explained consistently, and feedback provided to ensure processes are seen as fair, transparent, and applied consistently and clearly explained to all employees.<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Progression)  | Undertake regular feedback and general communication to staff to ensure that promotion processes which are seen as fair and transparent and that they are applied consistently and clearly explained to all employees.  | POD/Nick Mernock            | Objective 1       | Ongoing |  |  |
|                                |   | The organisations keep under review expectations around fitness levels. They are communicated clearly with relevant support and consideration is consistently given to the potential impact on protected characteristics (noting for example issues such as the menopause)<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Retention) | Develop an equality impact assessment on fitness levels and expectations. In addition, introduce an internal communications strategy to explain the expectation from the service of fitness levels, support provided, and analysis undertaken in line with protected characteristics & other relevant factors   | POD/Nick Mernock            | Objective 1       | Q3      |  |  |
|                                |   | Regular exit interviews and relevant analysis is undertaken, themes identified, discussed at senior levels & relevant action undertaken to address.<br><br>(IFSG Improvement Strategy – Retention)  | Promote the importance of ensuring exit interviews are undertaken, relevant themes identified and discussed at senior levels & appropriate action undertaken.   | POD/Nick Mernock            | Objective 1       | Q3      |  |  |
| 5                              | <b>Review and develop a plan to map workforce equality data across the organisation.</b>  | Workforce equality information captures the employment lifecycle and demonstrates proportionate/disproportionate impacts and progress/lack of progress at all stages of the employment life cycle including exit interview data and narrative feedback.   | Build and reflect equality data available and work with those responsible for workforce data collection to identify possible gaps and use of software to collect and analyse the data to reflect the NFCC ED&I toolkit and Census Data 2021.<br><br>Deliver six monthly reviews with accompanying communication activities focusing on increasing the staff disclosure rates with a particular focus on disability, religion and belief and sexual orientation. | POD/Nick Mernock            | Objective 1       | Ongoing |  |  |
| <b>Knowing our communities</b> |   |   |   |                             |                   |         |  |  |
| 6                              | <b>Improve relationships and engagement with diverse communities to help reduce inequalities and deliver equitable services. This is linked to station plans with a strong focus on staff making contact and knowing the communities surrounding their stations through a process of continuous improvement</b> | Station plans are informed by equality analysis and knowledge of local communities and their needs (advised by the Community Engagement Advisor) and MFRS can demonstrate that equality analysis has taken place and that station plans activities are linked to local risk models  | Build partnership & associated activities with partner organisations to access their community engagement resources to proactively engage with diverse groups from communities & build cultural competence across the organisation.<br><br>Provide contacts to connect communities to MFRS staff and provide advice and guidance to staff on how to engage  | Deb Appleton /Michelle Kirk | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |

|  |  |   |  |  |                   |         |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|-------------------|---------|--|--|
|  |  | Feedback indicates staff better understand the communities that they serve, and the Service has improved engagement with those communities.   | <p>Training needs analysis to be completed and engagement with operational crews and other staff in relation to effective community engagement. Put appropriate interventions in place where required in conjunction with Area Managers.</p> <p>Undertake ED&amp;I E-learning – review and update to provide advice on collecting monitoring data.</p> <p>Deliver additional monitoring questions for Safe and Well CFRMIS Data – led risk and equality analysis. For use by operational and departmental teams to improve services.</p> | Deb Appleton /Michelle Kirk                                    | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |
|  |  | Innovations and good practice adopted by the Protection/Prevention/Preparedness and Response functions can be tracked back to the use of equality data with inequalities including socioeconomic/duty factors identified and the involvement of diverse groups. These contributions have been recognised and integrated within station plans and aligned to published Fire Standards focusing on the code of ethics, community risk management planning, prevention, protection, safeguarding and others. | <p><b>Response</b> – Undertake work with Station Managers, Watch Managers and crews to build on the improving ED&amp;I data being collected during HFSC's (, and supporting staff to know their local communities and develop contacts to help understand their needs and developing staff confidence and competence</p> <p>Undertake focused work on mainstreaming considerations focused on socio-economic/duty factors and service delivery</p>   | AM Ben Ryder with support from - Strategy and Performance      | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |
|  |  |   | <b>Prevention</b> – Deliver Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and Safe and Well visits proportionately to reflect our diverse communities and that staff within the function have the capabilities to deliver a service to diverse communities  | AM Mark Thomas with support from - Strategy and Performance    | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |
|  |  |   | <b>Prevention</b> - Undertake focused work on mainstreaming considerations focused on socio-economic/duty factors for both employment service delivery matters   | AM Mark Thomas   | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |
|  |  |   | <b>Prevention</b> – We will look to support young people through the delivery of Prince's Trust Team Programmes and other Youth Education Engagement programmes. We will continue to follow an evidence-based approach when choosing children and young people for MFRS initiatives in partnership with our stakeholders and partners.   | AM Mark Thomas with support from - Strategy and Performance    | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |
|  |  |   | <b>Protection</b> – Build on previous delivery of Business Fire Safety education events to the diverse communities of Merseyside and ensure staff within the function have the capabilities to deliver a service to diverse communities.   | AM Kevin Longshaw with support from - Strategy and Performance | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |
|  |  |   | <b>Protection</b> – Build on existing work linked to the National NFCC FRS project and recommendations focusing on engaging with diverse business and business safety compliance work and evaluate the impact. In  | AM Kevin Longshaw with support from -                          | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |

|  |  |  |   |  |                   |         |  |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|-------------------|---------|--|--|
|  |  |  | addition, undertake focused work on mainstreaming considerations focused on socio-economic/duty factors and service delivery  | Strategy and Performance                                       |                   |         |  |  |
|  |  |  | <b>Protection – Reflect &amp; deliver</b> Safeguarding training bespoke to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking   | AM Kevin Longshaw with support from – Strategy and Performance | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |
|  |  |  | <b>Operational preparedness</b> – Deliver and & promote equality data available, utilised and reported to help prevent and mitigate risks in line with the community risk register. Build equality impact assessments within local resilience forum plans and exercising. In addition, deliver with fire control greater awareness and understanding of the diverse communities MFRA serves | AM Ged Sheridan with support from - Strategy and Performance   | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |
|  |  |  | <b>National Resilience</b> –Build ED&I considerations working closely with the national resilience and the urban search and rescue working and user groups and ensure staff within the function have the capabilities to deliver a service to diverse communities   | AM Paul Murphy   | Objective 2 and 4 | Ongoing |  |  |

| Inclusive leadership development      |   |  |  |                  |                   |         |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|------------------|-------------------|---------|--|--|--|
| 7                                     | <p><b>Embed Inclusive Leadership where leaders embody a leadership approach/behaviour that appreciates diversity, invites and welcomes everyone's individual contribution and encourages full engagement with the processes of decision making, to shape reality, recognising the overlap with MFRS's Leadership Message and the Code of Ethics for FRS and the associated five ethical principles and fire standards.</b></p> <p><b>Undertake internal positive action and identify and develop future leaders from underrepresented groups within MFRS to reach middle and senior level positions as part of the organisation's commitment towards positive action and workforce diversity.</b></p> | <p>Evidence shows leaders across the organisation consistently demonstrate behaviours that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are aligned to the Service Leadership Message, Leadership Behaviours, our Ground Rules and NFCC's Core Code of Ethics.</li> <li>• Appreciate diversity. Invites and welcomes everyone's individual contribution and encourages full engagement with the processes of decision-making and shaping reality.</li> <li>• Take conscious steps to break down barriers for people at risk of being excluded from society.</li> <li>• Create, change and innovate whilst balancing everybody's needs.</li> </ul> <p>The Service promotes Organisational Learning in its people focussed activities. Creating space for innovation and improvement through active peer support learning interventions.</p> <p>Increased diversity across the workforce.</p> <p>Improved access to job roles, applications, and development opportunities for people from underrepresented groups within MFRA and externally.</p> <p>(IFG Improvement Strategy – Progression)</p> <p>Through positive action, staff from underrepresented groups are supported to apply for Leadership roles at all levels.</p> <p>Middle and Strategic level positions are representative of wider organisational and community demographics.</p> | <p>Further embed Leadership Behaviours, Values and Core Code of Ethics in Leadership Development programmes and all relevant learning interventions.</p> <p>Promote and ensure access to diverse learning interventions as part of a comprehensive talent management resource.</p> <p>Continue to align all recruitment and selection activities to Leadership Behaviours, Values and Core Code of Ethics.</p> <p>Reflect on the outcomes from the Service's pilot Middle Manager Cultural Leadership Development Programme. Considering opportunities for further development and roll out.</p> <p>Reflect on project outcomes resulting from the Service's pilot Middle Manager Cultural Leadership Development Programme. Considering opportunities for further development and roll out.</p> <p>Promote and ensure access to development interventions such as Coaching and Mentoring.</p> <p>Build on the existing Reciprocal Mentoring programme, which currently involves members of the Senior Leadership Team and underrepresented members of the work force.</p> <p>Build on existing talent management resources such as the High Potential Programme to identify and support talent in underrepresented groups to achieve their potential.</p> <p>Engage with external partners such as Women in the Fire Service and AFSA to identify and support talent in underrepresented groups to achieve their potential.</p> | POD/Nick Mernock | Objective 1 and 4 | ongoing |  |  |  |
| ED&I Good governance & Communications |   |  |  |                  |                   |         |  |  |  |
| 8                                     | <p><b>SLT members will set an example by advocating ED&amp;I both internally and externally, holding management accountable and taking concrete measures to embed ED&amp;I throughout MFRS</b></p>  | <p>From a strategic standpoint SLT members can understand and articulate the organisation's current ED&amp;I environment both at a corporate and Function level for which they have overall responsibility</p>   | <p>Through advice and support work with SLT members to take necessary steps to cultivate ED&amp;I into their roles and responsibilities with a focus on: (a) how to articulate the current state of SLT's approach to ED&amp;I governance (b)</p>  | SLT              | Objective 2 and 3 | Ongoing |  |  |  |

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|    |   | <p>SLT have invested time and resources to educate themselves on ED&amp;I and ED&amp;I governance and embedding ED&amp;I into all SLT processes including engaging in reciprocal mentoring/coaching relationships with staff.</p> <p>Through integrity, SLT are able to demonstrate consistently how they have worked with management to embed ED&amp;I and what behaviours support it.</p> <p>From a performance perspective, SLT are able to confidently prioritise ED&amp;I as a strategic imperative on the SLT agenda and monitor relevant metrics and standards</p>  | <p>assessing the above approach against leading practices (c) identifying what can be done to achieve robust ED&amp;I governance and implement changes to accomplish ED&amp;I goals as SLT members</p>  |  |   |                               |  |  |
| 9  | <p><b>Quality Assure Equality Impact Assessment process.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review process to undertake EIA's and review actions as a result</li> <li>• Integrate and ensure EIAs consider both internal and external data</li> <li>• Engage with internal and external networks</li> <li>• Develop guidance and consider further training</li> </ul> | <p>Feedback indicates staff understand the purpose of EIAs and decision making and can evidence change in practice following completion of an EIA.</p> <p>Staff have considered and used internal and external data as part of decision making.</p> <p>Those with responsibilities for EIAs can demonstrate impact including organisational learning in response to an impact assessment(s) that have been undertaken.</p>   | <p>Develop further quality controls with monitoring and reporting.</p> <p>Provide staff with support to ensure robust EIAs are routinely undertaken and recorded and capture and share the EIA experience and impact of policy and practice.</p> <p>Develop long term capacity through learning and development to support staff to undertake robust EIAs.</p>  | POD/Nick Mernock   | Objective 2 and 3                                 | ongoing                       |  |  |
| 10 | <p><b>SLT agenda planning ensures ED&amp;I matters are discussed and progress shared with Authority members</b></p>   | <p>An annual report is published and shared with members to demonstrate progress in line with the ED&amp;I objectives.</p> <p>The MFRS annual report confirms all appropriate SLT agenda items have included an EIA endorsed and introduced by a Principal Officer who has ensured SLT members have been furnished with the right information, analysis, and advice including how SLT needs to act on these outputs.</p> <p>SLT and MFRA Authority members have regular discussions about progress on ED&amp;I as part of established feedback mechanism.</p> <p>SLT requests the regular undertaking of external ED&amp;I benchmarking to ensure external scrutiny but also consistently raises the level of reassurance and confidence that not only is MFRS legally compliant in terms of ED&amp;I but also reflecting best practice.</p> | <p>Strategies and policies accepted by SLT include an EIA.</p> <p>EIAs are discussed and key points recorded.</p> <p>Functional and station plans addressed and monitor progress on ED&amp;I</p> <p>Undertake the NFCC Equality Maturity Model Toolkit to help measure progress. Consider undertaking a further ED&amp;I Audit as part of a peer review.</p> <p>Senior sponsors for ED&amp;I networks act as guardians for their area of interest.</p> <p>Authority members are offered both development support and opportunities to engage in ED&amp;I activities.</p> <p>Appropriate benchmarking standards are undertaken to help demonstrate progress and compliance</p> | <p>SLT/Nick Mernock</p> <p>SLT/Deb Appleton and Ben Ryder</p> <p>Nick Mernock</p> <p>All SLT</p> <p>Ria Groves</p> <p>Nick Mernock</p> | <p>Objective 1&amp;2</p> <p>Objective 1&amp;2</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> |  |  |

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| 11 | <b>Build on existing practice and Integrate equality, diversity and Inclusion into all communications and engagement activity, procurement and finance activities both in terms of service delivery and employment.</b> | <p>MFRS has robust independent and anonymised staff reporting system in place that allows staff to report concerns.</p> <p>Feedback, both qualitative and quantitative indicates that MFRS listens, responds to, and communicates effectively with diverse communities and the workforce, both in terms of service delivery but also how MFRS markets itself as an employer of choice.</p> <p>Complete the implementation of the findings of the two external reports commissioned to ensure the MFRS external website and communications comply with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. Continue to build on the accessibility of the website and communications in general.</p>   | <p>Undertake a review of the existing anonymised staff reporting system and look at ways of strengthening staff access to independent reporting based on concerns they may have.</p> <p>Use multi-channel communications to send positive and informative signals to employees, future recruits, diverse communities, and Authority Members</p> <p>Stories are collated demonstrating the power of diversity and shared across the organisation and partners</p>              | POD  | Objective 1&2 | Q2 2024 |  |  |
|    | <b>Finance</b>  | <p>When making key financial decisions MFRS is confident the process they follow to assess the impact on equality of financial proposals is robust, and the impact that financial proposals could have on people with protected characteristics is thoroughly considered before any decisions are arrived at and in line with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance. As a procurer, MFRS is confident we meet the EHRC guidance 'Buying better outcomes: mainstreaming equality considerations in procurement - a guide for public authorities in England' and therefore are able to demonstrate consistently how equality, diversity and inclusion is considered at all stages of its procurement process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at the preparation stage</li> <li>• at the selection stage;</li> <li>• at the tender stage;</li> <li>• at award stage;</li> <li>• in contract monitoring.</li> </ul> | <p>EHRC guidance, "Making Fair Financial Decisions" Guidance for decision-makers is followed together with robust undertaking of EIA</p>  | Finance and Procurement/<br>Mike Rea/<br>Hywyn Pritchard |               |         |  |  |
|    | <b>Procurement</b>  | <p>In terms of procurement and challenging modern slavery MFRS can demonstrate compliance with the "Tackling modern slavery in government supply chains" guidance. In practice this will mean whoever MFRS procures from, the Service will ask parties to declare that they are not involved in slavery or human trafficking and that they will ensure that they remain slavery and human trafficking free;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take appropriate steps to ensure that there is no slavery or human trafficking in their own supply chains; and</li> <li>• provide a copy of their own Modern Anti-slavery and Human Trafficking Statement where required.</li> </ul>  | <p>Existing practice is reviewed in line with EHRC guidance 'Buying better outcomes: mainstreaming equality considerations in procurement - a guide for public authorities in England' and systems and processes are put in place to reflect the above guidance</p> <p>Existing practice is reviewed in line with national guidance Tackling modern slavery in government supply chains guidance and systems and processes are put in place to reflect the above guidance</p> | Finance and Procurement/<br>Mike Rea/<br>Hywyn Pritchard |               |         |  |  |