

# Public Document Pack



To: All Members of the Authority



R. Groves  
Monitoring Officer

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Our ref SH/RG

Date: 7 May 2025

Dear All,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **AUTHORITY** to be held at **1.00 pm** on **THURSDAY, 15TH MAY, 2025** in the Liverpool Suite at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle.

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

<https://youtube.com/live/0g6pR7qoZQQ?feature=share>

Yours faithfully,

*PP – S. Healey*

Monitoring Officer

Encl.

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# **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

## **AUTHORITY**

**15 MAY 2025**

## **AGENDA**

### **Members**

Councillor Les Byrom (Chair)  
Councillor James Roberts (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Brian Kenny (Vice- Chair)  
Councillor Tracy Dickinson  
Councillor Sam Gorst  
Councillor Gill Wood  
Councillor Edna Finneran  
Councillor Lynne Thompson  
Councillor Janet Grace  
Councillor Ed Lamb  
Councillor Doreen Knight  
Councillor Barbara Murray  
Councillor Lesley Rennie  
Councillor Dave Hanratty  
Councillor Jeanie Bell  
Councillor Andrew Makinson  
Councillor Lynne O'Keeffe  
Councillor Chris Page  
Police and Crime Commissioner Emily Spurrell

1. **Apologies**  
To consider any apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of Interest**  
To consider declarations of interest in relation to any item on the agenda.
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 10)  
To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025.
4. **Annual Scrutiny Review 2024-25** (Pages 11 - 18)  
To consider the Annual Scrutiny Review for 2024-25 (CFO/97/25).
5. **Scientific Support Services Contract** (Pages 19 - 22)  
To consider a report on the Scientific Support Services Contract (CFO/99/25).
6. **Procurement of Radio Packs** (Pages 23 - 26)  
To consider a report on the procurement of radio pack sets (CFO/98/25).

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## **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**27 FEBRUARY 2025**

### **MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Les Byrom (Chair), Tracy Dickinson, Edna Finneran, Sam Gorst, Jan Grace, Dave Hanratty, Brian Kenny, Doreen Knight, Ed Lamb, Andrew Makinson, Barbara Murray, Lynn O’Keeffe, Lesley Rennie, James Roberts, Lynne Thompson, Gill Wood and the PCC Emily Spurrell

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

#### **33. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Knight and Bell.

#### **34. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any item on the agenda.

#### **35. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 be approved as an accurate record subject to an amendment to Minute Item 25 to state that Councillor Lynne Thompson was to be included in the apologies.

#### **36. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - Appointments Committee**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last Appointments Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025 be agreed as an accurate record.

#### **37. Budget & Financial Plan 2025/26 - 2029/30**

Chair of the Authority, Councillor Byrom, reported that the Labour budget had been submitted to the Director of Finance in line with the Constitution and then shared with the membership of the Authority prior to publication of the agenda. No amendments had been received during that time and therefore the budget for 2025/26 – 2029/30 was put before Members for consideration.

Director of Finance and Procurement Mike Rea presented the budget, which allowed Members to set a medium-term capital and revenue financial plan in line with the Authority’s strategic aims.

Mike Rea took Members through the report noting that the proposed capital programme was £43.291 million, of which £39.701 million was prudential borrowing. This had increased by £13.336 million and included £11.809 million of new schemes and it was explained that inflation and growth had increased the current 2025/26 programme costs by £1.547million.

Mike Rea took Members through section D of the report, to consider the Minimum Revenue Provision and recommended members adopt a similar strategy to the current Minimum Revenue Provision strategy and continue to use the asset life method for all unsupported borrowing.

Members were advised that the Authority was required to consider the impact of borrowing over its prudential indicators as detailed in Section E of the report.

The Authority's Treasury Management Strategy could be found in Section F of the report and it was noted that the revenue costs built into the Medium Term Financial Plan had been deemed to be prudent, sustainable and affordable.

It was noted that the Authority had maintained a 2.5% annual pay award assumption for 2025/26 and future years. Members were advised that although CPI had risen in the previous month, it was expected to return to 2.75% by mid-2025. There had been an increase in the precept of £5 and an assumption of an increase of 2% had been applied to future years. Members were made aware that there had also been a decrease in Government funding in 2025 as summarised in the report.

Members were assured that the budget was balanced, subject to the key assumptions remaining consistent throughout the year.

The Chair thanked staff for their hard work in preparing the budget which was well received and put the Authority on firm accountancy footing.

Councillor Thompson referred to page 26 of the agenda which stated that the government funded Services Grant had been removed and she queried whether this would be permanent or if a better deal was being discussed with central government. Mike Rea explained that the grant had been removed completely from Fire and Rescue Authorities and Local Authorities to be repurposed as a Recovery Grant which the Fire and Rescue Authorities had not been in receipt of. Members were advised that it was now a case of waiting to see what the next funding review would provide for Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Councillor Makinson wished to place on record his thanks to the finance team for their hard work on the budget under such challenging circumstances nationally. He noted that the report recorded that the Authority had started taking cuts in 2010 but actually Merseyside had started to lose significant numbers of firefighters from 2005. He queried whether by not highlighting that, the Authority was not accurately conveying the impact of the challenges it had faced in the last 20 year. Furthermore, he noted that the government settlement this year had been an actual cash cut that Merseyside taxpayers would have to shoulder alongside a £1million extra national insurance rise. Councillor

Makinson also queried what was being done to mobilise Merseyside MPs and Council Leaders to make it clear that the Authority had been cut enough.

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan, assured Members that he had been in dialogue with the Treasury and Key Ministers including the Deputy Prime Minister over the forthcoming budget and Comprehensive Spending Review. He explained that the Authority had lobbied for £5 council tax flexibility which had been granted and would be used to protect the services that the Authority provided to the community. Members were advised that the budget was drafted without any detrimental impact on services and as such it was a testament to the officer's hard work and creativity. He questioned how far back the report should go in terms of referencing the significant periods of austerity imposed on Merseyside, but he felt that it had been dealt with effectively and the Authority had reinvested into the Service to replace resources that had previously been lost. The concerns about funding had been submitted to the Home Office and would now be passed on to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) given the changes in central government. The Chief Fire Officer had made it clear in that submission that he was seeking reinvestment into Fire and Rescue Services and seeking investment into areas of central provision that had previously been stripped out by austerity. The College of Fire was also included in that submission alongside a request for capital funding to be made available to the Authority so that it didn't have to set aside revenue and borrow to invest in its fire stations.

Councillor Brian Kenny welcomed the report noting that it was a robust and legally balanced budget. He noted that the Authority would be seeking to lobby the MHCLG Minister Alex Norris MP for a better deal with a multiyear settlement moving forward. He placed on record his thanks to Mike Rea and the team for their hard work to deliver this budget.

Chair of the Authority, Councillor Byrom explained that prior to austerity, the Authority's budget had been over £80million showing that it had not recovered yet from the cuts during that period. He noted the Authority would continue to lobby for a multi-year settlement. It was noted that the Authority had written to Angela Rainer MP and the Treasury about how the budget worked in practice and it was envisioned this lobbying would increase moving forward.

Councillor Gorst thanked the Authority for ensuring that the increase in council tax would not affect residents on Band A - C and he felt this adhered to the Authority's endeavours to protect the most vulnerable people in Merseyside.

Members were asked to agree the recommendations and the Chair asked explicitly if any Members were not in agreement with the recommendations. No Members wished to vote against the recommendations and as such they were passed unanimously.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the report and proposed budget be noted,

- b) the 2025/2026 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority budget as detailed in this report be approved,
- c) the Director of Finance and Procurement's recommendation on maintaining the current general fund balance at £3.700m and maintaining the reserves as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 158 of this report be approved,
- d) the proposal to increase the precept by £5.00 for Band D properties in 2025/2026, raising the Band D Council Tax from £91.25 to £96.25 and confirm the strategy for future precept rises (the plan assumes further increases of 2% in each year after that) be approved,
- e) the assumptions in developing a five-year financial plan outlined in the report and approve the 2025/2026 budget estimate of £77.934m be noted,
- f) the Capital Programme as summarised in Appendix B be approved,
- g) the 2025/2026 – 2029/2030 updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) outlined in the report and summarised in Appendix C be approved,
- h) the discretionary fees and charges uplift outlined in the report and summarised in Appendix E be approved,
- i) the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) strategy for 2025/2026, as this report outlines in paragraphs 87 to 96 be approved,
- j) the prudential indicators relating to the proposed capital programme, outlined in paragraphs 97 to 106 of this report be noted,
- k) the Treasury Management Strategy outlined in Section F be approved and the Treasury Management indicators set out in the section be agreed for:
  - External Debt Prudential Indicators
  - Operational Boundary for Debt
  - Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure
  - Upper limits on variable rate exposure
  - Upper and lower on the maturity structure of debt
  - Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 365 days
- l) that the recommendations above provide an approved framework within which officers undertake the day-to-day capital and treasury management activities be noted.



### **38. Asset Management Plans**

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan, presented the report which set out how the Authority aligned its physical assets and systems with its corporate aims and objectives over the next 5 years.

Members were advised that the report considered the Authority's financial plans and aspirations as captured in the Community Risk Management Plan.

**RESOLVED** that the 2025/26 – 2029/30 Asset Management Plans provided as appendices to this report be approved

### **39. Revision of Contract Standing Orders**

Members were advised by Monitoring Officer, Ria Groves, that the Constitution was being updated to reflect changes in legislation relating to the Procurement Act 2023. Members were informed that the reason for implementation was due to the UK's exit from Europe and that the changes also sought to streamline the Contract Standing Orders. The report highlighted that the changes would include greater transparency in public procurement as covered in paragraph 8 of the report.

Members were advised that there would be a transition period for any procurement activities which had taken place prior to the implementation of the Act, and anything undertaken thereafter. Following enactment of this legislation and subject to Member approval, the changes would be accepted within the Constitution and available to staff.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the enactment of the new legislation, the Procurement Act 2023 has come into force be noted; and
- b) the amendments to the Constitution incorporating the proposed Contract Standing Orders in appendix A be approved.

### **40. Procurement of Non-Domestic Water, Wastewater and Ancillary Services Contract**

Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan presented the report which related to the Authority's procurement of water and had been brought to Members due to the estimated value of the contract.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- b) the award of the non-domestic water, wastewater and ancillary services contract to Water Plus Ltd for a duration of three years with an estimated value of £690,000 and having an option to extend by one further year be approved.

**41. Paratech Rescue Systems (ND2)**

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Nick Searle, presented the report noting that the Authority was purchasing this equipment on behalf of the Home Office as part of the New Dimensions 2 asset refresh.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) an exemption under the Contract Standing Orders for the direct award as a sole supplier of the Paratech equipment detailed within the report that must be interoperable with the existing USAR Paratech equipment be approved; and
- b) the award of the contract to Vimpey Limited (the only agent in the UK to supply Paratech equipment) for the procurement of Paratech, rescue systems for a value of £2,108,740 plus freight be approved.

**42. Procurement of 19 USAR First Response Vehicles**

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Nick Searle presented the report which centred on the procurement exercise for the provision of Urban Search & Rescue First Response Vehicles.

The Authority had undertaken a competitive tender aimed to test the market and the preferred bid from that process was from Angloco Limited.

It was noted that there was a typographical error in the report which incorrectly referenced Angloco as Anglice in the recommendations, and as such the recommendations were agreed subsequent to that name being amended and also reflected in the minutes.

**RESOLVED** that the award of the contract for procurement of the First Response Vehicle's to Angloco Limited be approved.

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 15 May 2025

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	15 MAY 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/97/25
PRESENTING OFFICER	HEAD OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & MONITORING OFFICER , RIA GROVES		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES	REPORT AUTHOR:	MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	SCRUTINY COMMITTEE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP		
TITLE OF REPORT:	ANNUAL SCRUTINY REVIEW 2024-25		
APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A: SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PLAN 2023-25		

## Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with a review of the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee in 2024/25.

## Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members;
  - a) note the continued work of the Scrutiny Committee throughout 2024/25 and the matters considered from the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan; and
  - b) approve those items forming part of the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2023-25 that remain outstanding (Management of Contaminates, Enforcement and Protection and Pathway to Net Zero-Fleet Management) be carried forward into 2025/26.

## 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.
4. Due to the number of items Members wanted to review and scrutinise further, a two-year Scrutiny Forward Work Plan was proposed. Members will recall the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan was approved by the Authority at the meeting of the 12th October 2023 as 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 for 2024/25.
6. In 2024/25 the Scrutiny Committee met three times to consider areas of focus from the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan as below:

Meeting	Topics Discussed
23/07/2024	Organisational Culture
25/02/2025	Update on Grenfell Recommendations
	Health and Safety Annual Review
10/04/2025	Operational Response to Flooding
	Alternative Fuels and Energy Systems

### Organisational Culture

7. The Chief Fire Officer presented a 'Review of Organisational Culture' to Members.
8. The Chief Fire Officer detailed the set of recommendations from HMICFRS, the review of London Fire Brigade and other cultural reviews the Authority felt were pertinent to its own culture. These included recommendations relating to reporting concerns, conducting background checks, handling misconduct, leadership/management, training and development, capturing diversity data and enhancing diversity. The Chief Fire Officer noted the importance of setting the organisational culture, with a specific emphasis on leadership and diversity as outlined in the Authority's Cultural Action Plan and People Plan.
9. The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee expressed his gratitude to the Chief Fire Officer and to all staff for their dedication despite national criticism of emergency services and highlighted the noteworthy progress made to date. It was agreed Members noted the work undertaken on organisational culture within the Authority and that a further report be brought back to Members the following municipal year to provide an update of the continued progress.

### Update on Grenfell Recommendations

10. Group Manager Dave Watson delivered a presentation detailing the advancements made by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service ('Service') in relation to the Phase 1 recommendations, from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry comprising of 46 recommendations with 98% of the recommendations already implemented across the Service.
11. Members were also advised that further to the release of the Phase 2 report an additional 58 recommendations have been published with a gap analysis having been conducted by Officers, highlighting aspects that pertained to the Service.

12. The Chair praised Dave Watson for his clear and well-structured presentation, commenting on how easy it was to follow and understand. Members noted the progress of the work undertaken on behalf of the Authority.

#### Health, Safety & Welfare Annual Report 2024/25

13. The Scrutiny Committee considered the report and presentation by Group Manager Craig Whitfield on the Health, Safety & Welfare Annual Report against its Local Performance Indicators (LPIs) for Health and Safety during 2023/24 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 to understand the impact thereof. Craig Whitfield emphasised the importance of reporting injuries and near misses, as it was crucial for improving safety and operational effectiveness. Members were assured as to the compliance with corporate policies, legal requirements, and health and safety practices.
14. Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on all areas of the report including the performance around welfare and mental health. It was resolved that the performance outcomes against the health, safety and welfare targets of the Authority for 2023/24 had been scrutinised with the positive progress and safety culture noted.

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

15. The Scrutiny Committee considered the report and presentation by Group Manager Chris Barratt. The presentation provided an in-depth depiction of flooding, and the response provided by the Service locally, nationally and internationally.
16. Members were advised that extensive work is undertaken with partners as part of the Local Resilience Forum with flooding identified as a major foreseeable risk whilst being assured as to the training, skills and equipment provided to staff in anticipation of the response provided. As part of the CRMP the Service has also committed to prevention advice beyond fire safety which will include safety advice for residents in flood prone areas.
17. Members acknowledged the outstanding response provided as part of the flood capability and noted the report.

#### Alternative Fuels and Energy Systems

18. Group Manager John O'Boyle provided Members with changes facing the fire sector and how the Service responds to incidents following the emergence of alternative fuels. Members were advised that work across the sector is being conducted to learn more about alternative fuels, any such risks they may present and identify best practice in respect of responding to such incidents.

19. Members were reassured that the Authority was actively engaged in national efforts to educate the public and promote safety. Members were further reassured that although new technology and alternative fuels were developing quickly, which is a new risk moving forward, firefighters' safety remained the Authority's priority.
20. It was agreed by Members to note the report and should the NFCC reflect an agreed position across the sector on alternative fuels that this is presented to Members to consider along with any additional support of the same.

#### Scrutiny Forward Work Plan

21. 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.
22. As this Scrutiny Forward Work Plan comes to an end, it is noted that the following items remain outstanding: Management of Contaminates Enforcement and Prosecution Action and Pathway to Net Zero (fleet management). The remaining items are a result of the ambitious plan put forward for 2023-2025 and it is recommended that these remaining items form part of the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan for 2025-2026.
23. At the beginning of the next municipal year, Members of the Scrutiny Committee will be provided with topics recently suggested by its Members along with an overview of further potential topics by the Scrutiny Officer to consider when devising a new Scrutiny Forward Work Plan.

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#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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24. There are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications for the annual overview of the scrutiny topics presented throughout the year.

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#### **Staff Implications**

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25. The Democratic Services team will work with Members and arrange meetings accordingly.

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#### **Legal Implications**

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

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

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27. There are no direct financial considerations arising from this report.

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**Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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28. There are no direct implications arising out of this report.

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**Environmental Implications**

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29. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

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30. The scrutiny of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Services actions contained on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan, provides a transparent and accountable process.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**CFO/94/25** Scrutiny Forward Work Plan

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**CRMP** Community Risk Management Plan

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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	10 <sup>th</sup> April 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	23 <sup>rd</sup> July 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 Preparedness Estates SLT	Operational response to Wildfires – 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 Update on Pathway to Net Zero including Fleet Management – TBC Alternative Fuels - TBC 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	25 <sup>th</sup> 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> February 2025

*Standing Items:*

Health and Safety

Forward Work Plan

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	15 MAY 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/99/25
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER, NATIONAL RESILIENCE PAUL MURPHY	REPORT AUTHOR:	NATIONAL RESILIENCE, SUE TURNER
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	HYWYN PRITCHARD – HEAD OF PROCUREMENT JOHN MCINTYRE – CATEGORY MANAGER FOR GOODS & SERVICES CHRIS NOAKES – DIM CAPABILITY ADVISOR NEIL MILLWARD – DIM CAPABILITY OFFICER STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT SERVICES CONTRACT		

APPENDICES:	NONE
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## Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members that the current Scientific Support Services contract delivered by Bureau Veritas has the potential to exceed the Authority financial threshold of £300,000. Therefore, Authority approval is required to enable the continued delivery of National resilience ('NR') Detection Identification and Monitoring ('DIM') training courses to ensure Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) continue to meet their NR Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

## Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members approve the contract amendment for the contract value to exceed £300,000 (estimated to be £322, 203.95) and allow the remainder of courses scheduled to be delivered by the supplier Bureau Veritas UK, between June 2025 and end of contract 6th August 2025.

## Introduction and Background

3. With effect from 1st April 2017, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority ('the Authority') assumed responsibility for the management and coordination of the delivery of National Resilience (NR) Skills Acquisition Courses, on behalf of the Home Office (HO) until April 2025 when this responsibility transferred to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
4. NR training is delivered on a distributed basis, with the continued support of the Fire and Rescue Service sector via a sector led cost recovery model. A Training

Needs Analysis (TNA) process is carried out for each Fire and Rescue Service to determine the requirements for NR Skills Acquisition Courses to ensure KPIs are maintained, and crews remain fit for purpose, to enable a response to large scale emergencies.

5. The contract for the supply of the training required for National Resilience was awarded to Bureau Veritas after a competitive tender process in August 2023. The term of the contract is for two years with the contract terminating on the 6<sup>th</sup> August 2025.
6. The current two-year contract enables delivery of the two one-week initial courses (DIM1 and DIM2) and the scenario based two-day DIM3 course that all DIM Advisors must complete every two years.
7. The demand for course places is driven by changes in the FRSs that have DIM Advisors due to retirements, promotions, transfers and organisational changes, which can make it difficult to accurately forecast the number of courses needed. During the term of the contract the amount of training required has increased resulting in the proposed contract value exceeding £300,000. The continuance of the training provision is critical to ensure the requisite training has been provided and remains available to the sector for a national resilience response.
8. The overall cost for planned Scientific Support Services with Bureau Veritas delivered during the term of the contract (7th August 2023 – 6th August 2025) will be over the £300,000 threshold set by the Authority, totalling £322,203.95. (See breakdown in financial implications).
9. At the expiry of the current contract a new tender process will be conducted by the Procurement Department alongside the subject matter experts.

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#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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10. There are no direct implications arising from this report.

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#### **Staff Implications**

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11. FRSs have arranged alternative cover for personnel attending NR DIM Skills Acquisition Courses.
12. Instructors have allocated their time and commitment to support the delivery of courses.

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#### **Legal Implications**

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13. There is a legal obligation under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 on employers to have a duty of care for its employees which can include sufficient training of employees within their roles.
14. The procurement and contract management is compliant with Contract Standing Orders and the Public Contract Regulations (2015). The current contract was

awarded via a framework which allows for the contract value to increase under a contract amendment to the new proposed cost of £322,203.95.

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

15. The current spend from 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025 on the delivery of Scientific Support Services with Bureau Veritas, totals £284,754.47.
16. The forecasted cost for Scientific Support Services with Bureau Veritas delivered from 1st June – 6th August 2025 (expiry of the contract) totals £37,449.48.
17. Therefore, the proposed overall cost for planned Scientific Support Services with Bureau Veritas delivered between 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023 – 6<sup>th</sup> August 2025 totals £322,203.95.
18. Funding will be met through the existing NR budget.
19. The NR Training Team continues to monitor courses closely and due to the flexibility of the training model, any additional course requests will be considered throughout the year, to meet mid-year KPI shortfalls if the budget permits.

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

20. There is a risk to FRSs and the Lead Authority in not being able to maintain KPIs in the relative capabilities required under National Resilience, by not having a fully competent crew to deliver a response to a serious, significant or catastrophic incident in England.

### **Environmental Implications**

21. There are no direct implications arising from this report.

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22. The training will support the DIM Capability Teams to be fully equipped, and in a state of readiness to enable a response to large scale emergencies.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**NONE**

### **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

MFRA	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
NR	National Resilience
FRS	Fire Rescue Services

KPI	Key Performance Indicator
HO	Home Office
MHCLG	Ministry Housing, Communities and Local Government
TNA	Training Needs Analysis

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	15 MAY 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/98/25
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER NICK SEARLE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER, DAVID WATSON	REPORT AUTHOR:	GROUP MANAGER JON ROSCOE
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER GED SHERIDAN AREA MANAGER DAVE WATSON AREA MANAGER PAUL MURPHY STATION MANAGER MIKE BROADLEY STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	PROCUREMENT OF RADIO PACK SETS		

APPENDICES:	NONE
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## Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members that the packset radios currently utilised within Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service ('the Service') are due to be replaced as they are at their end of life and advise on the associated recommendations below.

## Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members approve the award of the contract to Radiocom Systems Limited for Motorola Radio packsets for £319,834.

## Introduction and Background

3. A packset radio is a fire ground communication device similar to that of a walkie talkie that allows staff to communicate over a large area and inside buildings when dealing with incidents.
4. As the current packset radios utilised within the Service are nearing their end of asset life, as part of the asset refresh Officers sought to review the potential options and procurement processes for replacement sets.
5. Trials of two separate packset radios were undertaken in a variety of locations and scenarios across Merseyside.
6. It was identified that the upgraded version of the current Motorola radio packsets were effective and the upgrade also allowed compatibility with the current equipment which can be utilised alongside the new radio packsets.

7. Alongside the Authority's own requirements to replace the current radio pack sets, as part of the contract it is proposed to also procure radio packsets for National Resilience requirements. Therefore, the contract will exceed the £300,000 limit that requires Authority approval.

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#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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8. As part of the trial consideration was given to the use and effectiveness of the products for users who may be hearing impaired.

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#### **Staff Implications**

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9. Operational staff were consulted and involved in the trial of the new Motorola packset radios. As the operation of the radios are identical to the current packset radios in use by the Service there are no training or staffing implications.

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#### **Legal Implications**

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10. The route to market under **Lot 1c: Tactical Radio Systems of Network Services 3**, which is Crown Commercial Services' framework agreement (RM6116) for Network Services (3). A direct award of contract to a nominated supplier is allowed under this Lot.

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

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11. The total estimated cost of the procurement including ancillary equipment for the Authority is £236,166.
12. The additional estimated cost of the contract for National Resilience (NR) is £83,668.
13. Making the total contract worth is an estimated £319,834.
14. The table below shows the financial arrangements in place for MFRS to complete the procurement:

Capital Budget 2025/26 (OPS059) - Fire Ground Equipment	<u>277,500</u>
Total cost including ancillary equipment	236,166
Total forecast costs	<u>236,166</u>
Forecast underspend against capital budget	<u>41,334</u>

15. The NR Capital Budget 2025/26 for this procurement will be from the New Dimensions 2 National Resilience USAR capital funding budget.
16. Significant savings have been made through redistribution of packset radios across the Service.



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**Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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17. The new packset radios have been tested in a variety of environments and scenarios. Risk assessments will be updated to reflect the change in packset radio series. No other changes are required as the radios operate in the same way as the packset radios currently used by the Service.

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**Environmental Implications**

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18. The Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) process where a company will harvest precious metals and recycle other elements can be facilitated through either the supplier or Telent, reducing the Service's environmental impact.

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

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

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19. Procuring best value for money products and making our firefighters safer and more effective at incidents.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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NONE

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**WEEE**                      **W**aste from **E**lectrical and **E**lectronic **E**quipment

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