

# Public Document Pack



**To: All Members of the Authority**

**R. Groves  
Monitoring Officer**

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Our ref MG/RG

Date: 18 February 2026

Dear All,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **BUDGET AUTHORITY** of the **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY** to be held at 13:00pm on **THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2026** in the Liverpool Suite at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle.

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

[https://youtube.com/live/3ei19\\_adaS8?feature=share](https://youtube.com/live/3ei19_adaS8?feature=share)

Yours faithfully,

*PP – M Griffiths*

Monitoring Officer

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# **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

## **AUTHORITY**

**26 FEBRUARY 2026**

## **AGENDA**

### **Members**

Councillor Les Byrom (Chair)  
Councillor James Roberts (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Jan Grace (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Jeanette Banks  
Councillor Jeanie Bell  
Councillor Edna Finneran  
Councillor Sam Gorst  
Councillor Dave Hanratty  
Councillor Doreen Knight  
Councillor Grahame McManus  
Councillor Andrew Makinson  
Councillor Kieran Murphy  
Councillor Lynn O'Keeffe  
Councillor Chris Page  
Councillor Lesley Rennie  
Councillor Mike Sullivan  
Councillor Lynne Thompson  
Councillor Heather Westhead  
Police & 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 - 14)**

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.

**4. Budget & Financial Plan 2026/27 - 2030/31 (Pages 15 - 98)**

To consider the report relating to the Budget & Financial Plan 2026/27 – 2030/31 (DFP/16/2526).

**5. Asset Management Plans (Pages 99 - 174)**

To consider the report relating to Asset Management Plans (CFO/40/2526).

6. **Microsoft Enterprise Agreement Renewal 2026** (Pages 175 - 178)  
To consider the report relating to the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement Renewal 2025 (CFO/41/2526).
  
7. **Bulk Fuel Contract 2026-2028** (Pages 179 - 182)  
To consider the report relating to the Bulk Fuel Contract 2026-2028 (CFO/39/2526).
  
8. **Award of Contract for the Procurement of Breathing Apparatus**  
(Pages 183 - 198)  
To consider the report relating to the Award of Contract for the Procurement of Breathing Apparatus (CFO/42/2526).
  
9. **Award of Contract for the Procurement of Personal and Leadership Development Training Services** (Pages 199 - 216)  
To consider the report relating to the Award of Contract for the Procurement of Personal and Leadership Development Training Services (CFO/43/2526).

## MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

23 OCTOBER 2025

### AUTHORITY

### MINUTES

**Present:** **Councillors** Les Byrom (Chair) James Roberts, Janet Grace, Jeanette Banks, Jeanie Bell, Edna Finneran, Sam Gorst, Dave Hanratty, Doreen Knight, Grahame McManus, Andrew Makinson, Kieran Murphy, Lynn O'Keeffe, Chris Page, Mike Sullivan, Lynne Thompson, Heather Westhead and Police and Crime Commissioner, Emily Spurrell

<b>Also Present:</b>	Chief Fire Officer	Nick Searle
	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	Ged Sheridan
	Director of Finance and Procurement	Mike Rea
	Monitoring Officer	Ria Groves

**18. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Lesley Rennie.

**19. Declarations of Interest**

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

**20. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025 be approved as an accurate record.

**21. Awarding of Contract for the Procurement of Firefighting and Technical Rescue Helmets**

Chief Fire Officer, Nick Searle, introduced the report informing Members of the outcome of the regional procurement exercise for firefighting and technical rescue helmets.

Members were made aware that the current helmets used by Fire and Rescue Services in the North-West for firefighting operations were procured regionally approximately ten years ago and the production of this model was scheduled to cease next year. The Chief Fire Officer added that the Authority also deployed a separate technical rescue for a limited number of operational staff in technical rescue functions such as the Search and Rescue Team (SRT), Combined Platform Ladder (CPL) operators and the Incident Investigation Team (IIT) crews.

It was confirmed that a direct award under the YPO framework was viable and compliant and the approach secured preferential pricing and long-term value for money. Members were reassured that the specification required helmets suitable for structural firefighting and technical rescue operations and was compliant with relevant standards. The Chief Fire Officer added that the supplier's proposal was evaluated against these requirements and met the operational, safety and financial criteria.

Members' attention was drawn to the total anticipated expenditure over the five-year contract being approximately £2.000m, however, the projected Authority expenditure over the life of the contract was approximately £540k. The Chief Fire Officer explained that current stock would be utilised until it had run out and natural migration would occur to switch to the new helmets, rather than replacing them all at the same time.

Councillor Kieran Murphy asked that with the cost being spent over a period of time, whether inflation in price had been considered. Head of Procurement, Hywyn Pritchard, explained that the costs would be governed by the fixed prices under the framework but would be subject to any CPI increases, over the term of five years.

Police and Crime Commissioner, Emily Spurrell, queried the challenges in uniform for women and wondered whether this had been factored in and if it would be better for female colleagues. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the uniform was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and was continuously under review. It was explained that the new helmets reduced weight considerably.

Councillor Dave Hanratty enquired that when the report mentioned the 'region' whether this was the Merseyside region or the North-West region. The Chief Fire Officer clarified that this was the North-West region. It was asked by Councillor Dave Hanratty whether this would have an impact on the cost being shared and it was confirmed that this was correct and Merseyside's expenditure of the £2.000m would be approximately £540k.

Councillor Sam Gorst entered the meeting at 13:11.

It was queried by Councillor Dave Hanratty how the Authority identified obsolete equipment and the lifespan of helmets. The Chief Fire Officer explained that firefighters had guidance around this and would check regularly if there was any damage to them. He reassured Members that if there was any damage, they would always be inspected and if necessary, replaced. Members were made aware that these pieces of equipment would be disposed of if they were not fit for firefighting situations or donated to charity, but it would depend on the circumstance.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the contents of the report be noted; and

- b) the award of the contract for firefighting and technical rescue helmets for the region to Bristol Uniforms Limited (a part of MSA Great Britain Holdings Limited), at a total cost of up to £2.000m be approved.

## **22. Approval of Expenditure for PPE Laundry**

Chief Fire Officer, Nick Searle, explained to Members that the existing laundry contract between Elis UK Ltd and the Authority began on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and was extended until 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2026. He advised that there had been a significant increase in the number of items sent for cleaning, which was due to positive health and safety culture, reducing firefighters to exposure of contaminants.

The Chief Fire Officer added that contract costs had risen by approximately 20% over the last two years and it was anticipated that the demand for the service would remain high and laundry costs could increase further prior to the contract ending in September 2026. Members noted that at the end of the current contract period, the Authority would re-tender to secure the most economically advantageous arrangement available.

It was confirmed that expenditure under the contract was forecast to exceed £300k over its lifetime and the current spend to date was £278k. Members noted that the estimated expenditure up to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2026 was between £347k and £382k. The Chief Fire Officer stated that whilst expenditure was projected to surpass the original approval threshold, efficiency measures identified were expected to deliver savings across the current Medium Term Financial Plan. Members were advised that the Authority would use internal Service couriers to collect and deliver laundry from all locations to create a single collection and drop off location, with an annual saving of £50k. The Chief added that current structural firefighting kit had a maximum wash life of 40 cycles, however, the Authority was considering the introduction of a full technical rescue ensemble which could reduce the cost by a further £20k which would create an annual saving of up to £70k. Additional expenditure would be funded from the current budgets.

Councillor James Roberts praised how the Authority was taking tackling contaminants so seriously to protect the health of firefighters and staff. He drew Members' attention to paragraph 20 on page 41 of the agenda which explained the wash life of structural firefighting kit having a maximum wash life of 40 cycles and technical rescue PPE having no wash life limitation which would reduce washing frequency. Councillor James Roberts queried whether the priority of tackling contaminants was still taking place if the kits were being washed less frequently.

The Chief Fire Officer stated that the contaminants were predominately on the structural firefighting kit as these were used in big fires such as house fires where maximum protection was necessary. Members noted that technical rescue jackets were worn more frequently for other types of incidents such as road traffic collisions, the kit being utilised appropriately would allow the use of the structural firefighting kit to be reduced and therefore the 40 washing cycles would be spread out over a longer period of time.

Councillor Dave Hanratty asked for reassurance that there would be no cross contamination for the couriers who were picking up contaminated kits. The Chief Fire Officer noted that cross contamination was taken very seriously and when kit was utilised at an operational incident, this kit was double bagged, labelled and placed in a set area in the station where the contamination was contained.

It was queried by Councillor Jeanette Banks whether the training and research into the new equipment would continue to be used for future use, and this was confirmed as correct. Councillor Les Byrom asked for clarity around ensuring the correct kit was being worn. The Chief Fire Officer stated that staff were very well trained and strict around the level of PPE worn at an operational incident. It was acknowledged that all firefighters would know what kit to wear anyway, however, the Officer In Charge would step in if necessary to inform the team which kit was required to be worn.

Councillor Grahame McManus drew Members' attention to paragraph 8 on page 40 where it read that the re-tendering process would begin at the end of the current contract period. He wondered if the re-tender started prior to the end of the contract or at the end of the contract. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the re-tender would begin prior the end of the current contract.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- b) the additional expenditure with Elis UK Ltd in line with the current contract framework be approved.

### **23. ND2 Procurement: Telescopic Handler**

The report was introduced by Chief Fire Officer, Nick Searle, who noted that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority was the lead authority for National Resilience (NR) and all procurement for the multi-million-pound refresh of NR kit and equipment.

Members were made aware that New Dimensions 2 (ND2) was a national capability uplift programme that supported the UK NR. The Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Capability had a fleet of Multi-Purpose Vehicles (MPVs) that operated to fulfil a number of outcomes. These included the loading and unloading of USAR vehicles and modules in Merseyside, the transportation of equipment at an incident ground and the moving of rubble at USAR incidents.

It was confirmed that the current MPVs had been discontinued and subsequently it had become difficult to maintain the current fleet of vehicles. The Chief Fire Officer also acknowledged that the current fleet had been deemed as unsustainable and that a Telescopic Handler provided greater capability. The procurement of four Telescopic Handlers formed part of a wider project for ND2.

The Chief Fire Officer made Members aware that the funding for Telescopic Handlers would be provided by MHCLG as part of the ND2 USAR project and the procurement of these was £423,000.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- b) the award of the contract to P. Tuckwell Ltd T/A Tuckwell's for four telescopic handlers, at a total cost of £432,000 be approved.

#### **24. Apprenticeship End Point Assessments**

Chief Fire Officer, Nick Searle, introduced the report and reminded Members that the Authority moved from the previous National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) approach for the development of new firefighters and implemented the Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship in 2019, which was a two-year programme. Members noted that under the apprentice programme, the Authority was able to reclaim significant costs associated with the training and development programme from the apprenticeship levy. It was explained that the final stage of the apprenticeship for a firefighter was the End-Point Assessment (EPA) and costs would only be incurred once an EPA was requested.

Members were advised that an independent End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) was required as part of the apprenticeship.

The Chief Fire Officer acknowledged that the route to market was through YPO's Apprenticeships and Associated Framework that allowed direct award to providers. Members were advised that the direct contract award to SFJA would enable a continuation of the ongoing successful partnership that the Authority had. It was explained that the current SFJA cost per EPA was £1980 and the contract value had been estimated based on a maximum of 40 EPAs per year which would equate to £396k for five years. The Chief Fire Officer drew Members' attention to the table on page 50 which showed the predicted EPA's and costs over the years. He explained that the table suggested that the number of EPAs would reduce to around 10 per year from 2029 lowering the predicted cost to £265k. He reassured Members that the Authority would only book enough EPAs for firefighters who reached that element of the apprenticeship.

The Chair commented that this had been a very successful system of functionally managing and enabling new recruits to progress through a structured process.

Councillor Dave Hanratty praised the use of the apprenticeship levy and did not think organisations utilised it enough. He asked how people had come through the apprenticeship scheme and the King's Trust and Beacon Courses. Councillor Dave Hanratty commented on succession planning taking two years to implement and stated that the Authority might not know when firefighters would retire, however, if the Authority could work out the number of

apprenticeships needed to backfill any vacancies, this approach could be seamless.

Councillor Les Byrom suggested that the Authority have a learning lunch on the modern apprenticeship scheme.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that quarterly meetings were held to monitor staffing levels and ensured resources were appropriately allocated . It was noted that, historically, firefighters typically retired after 30 years of service, however, this was no longer the case, making retirement projections more difficult to predict. Members were informed that over the past six years, three recruitment courses had been conducted annually. This would be reduced to two courses per year, with a longer-term goal of recruiting approximately 9–10 new firefighters annually. Consequently, adjustments to the recruitment process would be required to reflect these changes.

Councillor Dave Hanratty mentioned that there were a lot of benefits that could be utilised from all Fire and Rescue Services across the country by taking part in the apprenticeship scheme. The Chief Fire Officer noted that there had been firefighters from the Isle of Man on the previous recruit courses and the Authority had already had a further request from the Isle of Man and Guernsey for firefighters to be put on future courses. He made Members aware that there were apprentices in a number of control and Green Book roles across the Service. He also noted that participants in the King's Trust scheme did not necessarily aspire to pursue careers as firefighters; rather, the programme aimed to equip them with the skills required to gain employment within their communities.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- b) the award of a contract for the End Point Assessment of Apprenticeships to Skills for Justice Awards for a period of 5 years based on a total maximum value of the contract of up to £396k, all of which is fully paid from the Apprenticeship Levy, be approved.

**25. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report and Equality Analysis - Workforce and Employment Data reports 2024/25**

Chief Fire Officer, Nick Searle, highlighted the equality diversity and inclusion annual report which detailed the five equality objectives on pages 63 – 73. He noted that objective 1 showed that the Authority had 84 female firefighters which represented 13.8% of total firefighters, with the national percentage being 9.3%. Nationally, firefighters from an ethnic minority background equated to 5.4% and Merseyside showed 7.9% of the operational workplace being from an ethnic minority background.

Equality objective 3 showed that 51,242 home fire safety checks took place last year which was a huge amount and youth engagement activities and engaging

with the young diverse population showed continuing success. It was explained that in terms of the work of the Kings Trust engaging with young people from 16-25 who were not in employment or education, 58.3% of those were male, 19.8% were from an LGBTQ+ background and 77.1% considered themselves to have a disability.

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted the progression with objective 5 where MFRS was awarded the Fair Employment Charter, White Ribbon Accreditation work that was ongoing with Northwest Protection Governance Structure and the ASFA Award winners. He drew Members' attention to the workforce data and analysis starting on page 77 which showed that females in Fire Control was 87% with males being only 13% which showed that there was further work to be done in that area.

Councillor Jeanie Bell thanked the Chief for the amount of work that had gone into the report. She commented on the information about the Fire Cadets Programme on page 67 highlighting that the majority of attendees were white British which showed a lack of diversity. She asked what the Authority was doing to be proactive in recruiting in diverse communities for fire cadets going forwards. Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Ged Sheridan, advised Members that the Authority currently had a dedicated team in the prevention team who visited schools in Merseyside and next year there would be more involvement with wholetime firefighters on stations visiting schools. He noted the importance of young people seeing the diversity of firefighters when school visits take place and the Authority hope to see the benefits in the longer term.

Councillor Les Byrom highlighted the importance of fire cadets and the need for volunteers to come forward to continue this process. He also commented on the need to find people to grow a cadet community and give young people an opportunity to work with the Fire Service.

On page 63, Councillor Jeanie Bell highlighted the pay gap for support staff and wondered if this was within the Authority's control and whether it was something that could be improved going forwards. The Chief Fire Officer acknowledged that he was aware of this small difference with non-uniformed staff and it was being looked at. He explained that there had been a lot more flexibility in roles since the new management team changed and there was fluctuation between grey and green book roles. The Authority had been transitioning roles that were historically classified as grey book positions into areas such as Prevention and Protection to promote greater fluidity within the organisation. This restructuring provided green book staff with opportunities to progress into more senior roles. It was confirmed that further changes were expected between now and next year. This shift had been driven, in part, by the recognition that non-uniformed staff previously perceived limited opportunities for advancement due to a number of senior posts being labelled as uniformed positions.

Councillor Jan Grace queried whether female firefighters were being actively encouraged to aspire to senior management level roles, and this was confirmed as true. The Chief Fire Officer commented that previously the Service did not introduce direct entry into senior roles, instead focussed on recruiting firefighters with the aim of career progression into senior management roles in time, which

was why it had taken a while for female senior officers to come through the ranks. The Chief Fire Officer also noted, following the time period the report refers to, the Service had now also recruited a female Station Manager and Group Manager. He added that when females saw females in those higher roles, they aspired to do the same and knew it was possible and he explained that there were now six female Station Managers and one Group Manager.

Councillor Chris Page praised the reference to the home fire safety checks in the vulnerable community as he saw an advantage of these when he attended older persons day and was very impressed with the teams' work. He mentioned that fire control statistics stood out to him on the report as there were not many leavers or new employees in that team, however, this team lacked diversity more than other areas. The Chief Fire Officer acknowledged that fire control were seen as separate in the past, however, over the last few years it had been made more inclusive as they now worked in the same building and more expenditure had gone into fire control, with the team growing. He added that the number of males in fire control had also grown, meaning that diversity was improving. It was noted that there did not used to be a lot of progression in fire control, however, that was no longer the case as there was more fluidity in the Service, with employees moving across departments whilst ensuring that the right person got the job.

Concerns were raised by Councillor Sam Gorst around the data table on page 89 and he asked if there were any specific BAME management programmes or opportunities at management level for firefighters or staff. It was advised that there were no specific BAME management programmes as it was the same for all members of staff, however, there had been an increase in senior officers recently, with the last temporary Group Manager process including two employees who were from BAME backgrounds. He added that whilst there was a positive improvement in that area, there was still work to be done.

Councillor Les Byrom commented that the Authority wanted the population of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority to look like the population of Merseyside and if there were any artificial barriers in the way, then Members should look to change this. He added that it was important for Members to have the key figures and statistics given in the report to see how the Authority was performing.

Councillor Chris Page stated that this was not a tick box exercise and the Authority wanted to give everyone the best opportunity so that they ended up with the best Fire and Rescue Service possible and recruited the best people. He added that there was a huge benefit from making all sorts of adjustments across the organisation for everybody. Councillor Les Byrom agreed and noted that the Authority's aim was to keep the public safe and have high regards to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Councillor Dave Hanratty praised the organisation on their policies, procedures, working groups and everything behind the scenes that ensured that employees were respected, appreciated and valued and had an organisation and culture that represented the community. He added that people wanted to work for the Authority and when attending staff engagement days, staff always made

comments that they loved working for the Authority which was a testament to the senior management.

It was acknowledged that the report stated dates from 2024-2027, however, Councillor Dave Hanratty asked to have that extended for a further five years to ensure that this could not be undermined regardless of what happened in the future. He stressed the importance of protecting all staff from now and in the future so that they felt secure in work and the roles they undertook.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that this was an annual report and so would be done annually and the objectives were from 2024-2027 which was tied in with the CRMP. He reassured Members that the planning for the new CRMP would begin in the new year, along with looking at whether the objectives were still fit for purpose moving forwards..

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the contents of the report be noted;
- b) the publication of the ED&I Annual Report (1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025) on the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) website be approved;
- c) the publication of the Equality Analysis – Workforce and Employment Data Report (1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025) on MFRS website be approved; and
- d) the publication of these reports demonstrating the Authority's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and demonstrates compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty be noted.

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

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<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>BUDGET AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>26 FEBRUARY 2026</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>DFP/16/2526</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT, MIKE REA</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT, MIKE REA</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT, MIKE REA</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>BUDGET &amp; FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27 - 2030/31</b>		
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A:</b>	<b>DRAFT SUMMARY REVENUE BUDGET ANALYSIS</b>	
	<b>APPENDIX B:</b>	<b>PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026/27 – 2030/31</b>	
	<b>APPENDIX C:</b>	<b>PROPOSED 2026/27 – 2030/31 FIVE YEAR MTFP</b>	
	<b>APPENDIX D:</b>	<b>RESERVES</b>	
	<b>APPENDIX E:</b>	<b>DISCRETIONARY SERVICES FEES AND CHARGES</b>	

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To present information to allow Members to set a Medium-Term Capital and Revenue Financial Plan that allocates resources in line with the Authority’s strategic aims and ensures that the Authority delivers an efficient and effective value for money service aligned with its budget principles.
2. This will enable the Authority to set a budget for 2026/2027 while determining a precept level in line with statutory requirements.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Members;

- a) note the report and proposed budget;
- b) approve the 2026/2027 Fire and Rescue Authority budget as detailed in this report;

- c) approve the Director of Finance and Procurement's recommendation of maintaining the General Fund Reserve balance at £3.900m and maintaining the reserves as outlined in paragraphs 142 to 152 of this report;
- d) approve the proposal to increase the precept by £5.00 for Band D properties in 2026/2027, raising the Band D Council Tax from £96.25 to £101.25 and confirm the strategy for future precept rises (the plan assumes further increases of £5.00 in 2027/28 and £5.00 in 2028/29 for the remaining years of the multi-year settlement and 2% in each year after that);
- e) note the assumptions in developing a five-year financial plan outlined in the report and approve the 2026/2027 budget estimate of £86.039m;
- f) approve the Capital Programme as summarised in Appendix B;
- g) approve the 2026/2027 – 2030/2031 updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) outlined in the report and summarised in Appendix C;
- h) approve the discretionary fees and charges uplift outlined in the report and summarised in Appendix E;
- i) approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) strategy for 2026/2027, as this report outlines in paragraphs 81 to 91;
- j) note the prudential indicators relating to the proposed capital programme, outlined in paragraphs 92 to 102 of this report;
- k) approve the Treasury Management Strategy outlined in Section F and agree the Treasury Management indicators set out in the section 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; and
- l) note that the recommendations above provide an approved framework within which officers undertake the day-to-day capital and treasury management activities.

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## **Introduction and Background**

- 3. The Authority is required to determine its budget and precept level for 2026/2027 by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026.
- 4. This report will present all the necessary financial information in a single report.

This report considers:

- a. Forecast Revenue Estimates
  - b. The Proposed Capital Programme
  - c. Any Revenue Savings and Growth Options
  - d. The Treasury Management Strategy
  - e. The Minimum Revenue Payment Policy for the Authority
5. Considering all the financial issues to be taken into account in a single report ensures that the Authority can:
- f. Consider the borrowing freedoms available under the prudential code
  - g. Reflect best practice
  - h. Provide value for money
  - i. Focus on the link between capital investment decisions and revenue budgets
  - j. Continue developing their strategic financial plan
6. The following report structure will be adopted:

Section	Focus	Paragraph
A	Executive Summary	7 – 23
B	Background Information	24 – 62
C	Capital Programme Strategy	63 – 80
D	Minimum Revenue Provision Statement	81 – 91
E	Prudential Indicator Report	92 – 102
F	Treasury Management Strategy Statement	103 – 105
G	Revenue Forecasts 2026/2027 – 2030/2031	106 – 132
H	Adequacy of Reserves and Balances	133 – 154
I	Budget Timetable & Resolution	155 – 158

## A) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

7. The Authority must set a balanced 2026/2027 budget and precept level by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026.
8. The budget and financial plan should allocate resources in line with the Authority's Vision and Purpose:

### **Our Vision:**

To be the best Fire and Rescue Service in the UK.  
One team, putting its communities first.

### **Our Purpose:**

Here to serve. Here to protect. Here to keep you safe.

9. Members approved a 2025/2026 – 2029/2030 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) at the Budget Authority meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Based on assumptions around the 2026/2027 and future years funding and expenditure, the MTFP identified a financial challenge in 2026/2027 of £0.650m, rising to £1.442m by 2029/2030. Due to the uncertainty over future funding and expenditure, the Authority agreed to deal with any financial challenge once its future Government funding had been confirmed.
10. The MTFP has now been updated for the 2026/2027 Government Fair Funding Assessment (FFA) and takes account of the changes to the MTFP's assumptions and technical adjustments that Members approved at the January 2026 Budget Strategy Day. Section G of this report outlines the changes in the proposed new MTFP in detail. The changes to the current MTFP are summarised below:-

<b>PROPOSED 2026/27 - 2030/31 MTFP</b>					
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Current 2026/27 MTFP Forecast</u></b>	650	959	1,139	1,442	1,442
<b><u>Summary of impact changes to 2025/26 MTFP</u></b>	-650	-959	-1,139	-386	-237
<b><u>Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit</u></b>	0	0	0	1,056	1,205

11. Overall, the changes to the assumptions, technical adjustments, and funding amendments have resulted in the forecast balanced position for 2026/2027, 2027/2028, 2028/2029 and the updated MTFP is attached to this report as Appendix C.
12. Although a deficit is forecast from 2029/2030 onwards, uncertainty over government funding, potential changes to the Fair Funding Fire Formula, and future pay awards mean substantial uncertainty exists over these forecasts. Members are, therefore, asked to note any forecast financial challenge at this time.
13. As with any assumptions, those built into the medium-term financial plan will be at risk from factors beyond the Authority's control, for example, pay awards. If any

actual future cost or funding level varies from the MTFP assumption, then the forecast budget position will be affected. The Authority receives regular financial review reports throughout the year, and any corrective action to keep the 2026/2027 budget and MTFP balanced will be considered by Members as part of this reporting process.

14. The proposed updated MTFP assumes the Authority will increase the 2026/2027 precept by £5.00 per annum for Band D properties. If the Authority wished to hold a referendum and increase the precept by more than £5.00, then the Authority would face a risk, if the electorate voted against the increase, of incurring the expense of re-billing all the districts within Merseyside at an estimated cost of +£1m.
15. The Authority has created reserves in recent years to meet the cost of future projects and initiatives or as a contingency against specific risks. Section H of this report considers the current reserves and planned use. Consequently, committed reserves at the start of 2026/2027 are estimated at £13.447m, of which £6.563m will be utilised by the end of 2027/2028. The overall movement in reserves over the next 10+ years is outlined below and in Appendix D:

Committed Reserves																
	Balance C/fwd From 2025/26	Proposed Change	Proposed Increase	Revised Balance C/fwd for 2026/27	Estimated 2026/27 Use	Estimated 2027/28 Use	Estimated 2028/29 Use	Estimated 2029/30 Use	Estimated 2030/31 Use	Estimated 2031/32 Use	Estimated 2032/33 Use	Estimated 2033/34 Use	Estimated 2034/35 Use	Estimated 2035/36 Use	Estimated 2036/37 Use	Held to Cover Risk
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Emergency Related Reserves</b>																
Bellwin / Emergency Planning Res	222			222												222
Insurance Reserve	534			534												534
<b>Modernisation Challenge</b>																
Smoothing Reserve	1,400			1,400												1,400
Pensions Reserve	300			300		-200	-100									0
Recruitment Reserve	1,814	-690		1,124		-624	-250	-250								0
Collection Fund Reserve	100			100		-100										0
Carbon Net Zero Reserve	2,000			2,000		-2,000										0
<b>Capital Investment Reserve</b>																
Capital Investment Reserve	2,036		493	2,529		-1,529	-500	-500								0
<b>PFI Annuity Reserve</b>																
PFI Annuity Reserve	1,166			1,166	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	407
<b>Specific Projects</b>																
Health & Safety Reserve	57			57		-57										0
Equipment Reserve	466			466		-466										0
Clothing Reserve	940			940		-940										0
Health and Wellbeing Reserve	7			7		-7										0
Training Reserve	270			270		-170	-100									0
Inflation Reserve	1,200	690		1,890												1,890
<b>Ringfenced Reserves</b>																
Community Risk Management Res	236			236		-126	-110									0
Energy Reserve	111			111		-111										0
New Dimensions Reserve	95			95		-95										0
Forecast Use of Reserves in the year	12,954	0	493	13,447	-69	-6,494	-1,129	-819	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	4,453
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves Bal C/fwd</b>	<b>12,954</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>13,447</b>	<b>13,378</b>	<b>6,884</b>	<b>5,755</b>	<b>4,936</b>	<b>4,867</b>	<b>4,798</b>	<b>4,729</b>	<b>4,660</b>	<b>4,591</b>	<b>4,522</b>	<b>4,453</b>	<b>4,453</b>
<b>General Revenue Reserve</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>16,854</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17,347</b>	<b>17,278</b>	<b>10,784</b>	<b>9,655</b>	<b>8,836</b>	<b>8,767</b>	<b>8,698</b>	<b>8,629</b>	<b>8,560</b>	<b>8,491</b>	<b>8,422</b>	<b>8,353</b>	<b>8,353</b>

16. It is recommended by the Director of Finance and Procurement that the Authority's General Fund Reserve will remain at £3.900m. This figure represents 5% of the current net revenue budget, aligning with prudent financial management standards.
17. Members should be mindful that reserves, balances, and one-off savings should only be used to finance one-off expenditure. If such monies are used to fund ongoing revenue expenditure without taking action to reduce underlying expenditure, the Authority would face the same deficit in the next and future years but without reserves available to finance it. This is underlined by the Auditor's 'Golden Rule' - that "one-off" revenue reserves should not be used to support 'ongoing' revenue expenditure.

18. Section C of this report details the proposed five-year capital programme. The table below summarises the proposed £44.195m of investments:

**Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
Buildings & Land	9,648,800	4,357,000	2,573,300	993,500	1,102,500	622,500
Fire Safety	3,175,000	635,000	635,000	635,000	635,000	635,000
ICT	11,139,900	2,256,000	978,200	2,961,400	3,707,900	1,236,400
NRAT Resilience Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operational Equipment & Hydrants	6,881,500	3,518,000	693,000	902,000	761,000	1,007,500
Vehicles	13,349,900	4,981,000	1,663,900	690,000	3,465,000	2,550,000
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>44,195,100</b>	<b>15,747,000</b>	<b>6,543,400</b>	<b>6,181,900</b>	<b>9,671,400</b>	<b>6,051,400</b>

19. The Authority needs to be mindful of the revenue costs of borrowing. The Table below outlines how the £44.195m of investment will be funded:

Financing Available	Total £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2029/30 £
Capital Receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0
RCCO	1,875,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000
Capital Reserves	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Non Borrowing	1,875,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000
Unsupported Borrowing	42,320,100	15,372,000	6,168,400	5,806,900	9,296,400	5,676,400
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>44,195,100</b>	<b>15,747,000</b>	<b>6,543,400</b>	<b>6,181,900</b>	<b>9,671,400</b>	<b>6,051,400</b>

20. The proposed capital programme has a borrowing requirement of £15.372m in 2026/2027 and £42.320m across the whole life of the plan. These commitments have been built into the proposed financial plan, and this report provides Members with several prudential indicators so they can ensure that this commitment is considered affordable, prudent, and sustainable in light of these prudential indicators (see Section E of the report).
21. The Prudential Code requires the Authority to set a Treasury Management Strategy that includes several indicators and limits. It sets a framework for managing investments and borrowing for the Director of Finance and Procurement.
22. The proposed strategy is set out in Section F and includes limits for the next three years on: -
- a. Overall Level of External Debt
  - b. Operational Boundary for Debt
  - c. Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure
  - d. Upper limits on variable rate exposure
  - e. Upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of debt
  - f. Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 365 days
23. Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is the amount set aside from the revenue budget each year to ensure the Authority can repay its debt liabilities. Under the

Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 and the Statutory Guidance on MRP (5th Edition), the Authority is required to prepare an annual statement of its policy for the forthcoming year. These updated regulations require the Authority to determine a prudent provision based on its total Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The Director of Finance and Procurement has reviewed the policy to ensure compliance with these new requirements, and the proposed MRP policy for 2026/2027 and future years is outlined in Section D.

## B) BACKGROUND INFORMATION

24. This section provides general financial information on the Authority's finances and financial health.
25. If any organisation wants to be successful, its budget setting and MTFP must allocate resources to support its key strategic aims and priorities. This is a vital consideration when organisations face periods of severe financial challenges. For many years, the Authority has maintained a comprehensive rolling five-year MTFP and capital programme.
26. We remain dedicated to delivering high-quality services and rapid emergency response to ensure the safety of our communities. In common with the wider public sector, the Authority has navigated a challenging economic climate for over a decade. Despite experiencing real-terms budget reductions of approximately 50% since 2003, we have successfully managed evolving risks and demand through decisive action. Maintaining this resilience has, however, necessitated significant structural changes, including the reduction of our frontline workforce from over 1,000 to 620 firefighters and a decrease in our fleet from 43 to 26 fire engines in 2019.
27. In recent years, we have taken decisive steps to strengthen our capacity and resilience. This includes increasing our workforce to 642 firefighters and expanding our fire engine fleet to 34, improving our ability to respond to foreseeable and specialist risks.
28. The current budget provides for:
  - a. 642 FTE firefighters
  - b. 35 FTE staff in fire control
  - c. 297 FTE support and technical staff
  - d. Appliances:
    - i. Days: 27 immediately available plus 7 on a 30-minute recall
    - ii. Night: 21 immediately available plus 13 on a 30-minute recall
  - e. 21 fire stations maintained by various demand-led duty cover systems.
29. The proposed MTFP looks to:
  - **Investment in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** We are investing in new Breathing Apparatus and essential ancillary components. This includes a full upgrade of our Technical Rescue Ensembles, encompassing specialised helmets, tunics, trousers, and footwear.
  - **Investment in Fleet and Rescue Equipment:** The Authority is scheduled to take delivery of six new fire appliances during the 2026/2027 financial year. Simultaneously, all heavy-duty cutting equipment will be replaced to ensure peak operational performance and enhanced anti-theft security.

- **Training and Competence Assurance:** We are expanding our investment in specialist training and professional assurance. This includes funding for bespoke equipment, consumables, and modernised protective clothing.
  - **Support Services and HR:** Strengthening our internal support by adding HR and Occupational Health resources and launching apprenticeships in Procurement and Communications to build future talent.
  - **Strategic Establishment Review:** The budget provides the necessary provisions to review the Establishment, ensuring alignment with job evaluation standards and mitigate challenges of recruitment, retention, and organisational expansion.
  - **Digital Infrastructure:** Improving digital systems and information technology facilities across the Authority.
  - **Estate Modernisation:** We are committing further funding to improve our facilities, including a total makeover of Kirkby Fire Station in 2026/2027. These refurbishments will ensure our stations are welcoming for everyone while introducing modern systems to manage contaminants and keep our firefighters safe.
  - **Strategic Energy Investment:** The Authority is dedicating £2 million reserve to a solar panel rollout and decarbonisation project. This strategic "invest-to-save" initiative provides a hedge against energy market volatility, delivering an initial £150,000 in annual savings, rising to a sustained £250,000 reduction in revenue expenditure from 2028/2029.
30. The Authority's revenue budget requirement (gross day-to-day revenue spending less fees, specific grants, and other income) is funded approximately 52% from the Government and 48% from Council Tax (precept income).

**Government Funding - Fair Funding Assessment (FFA):**

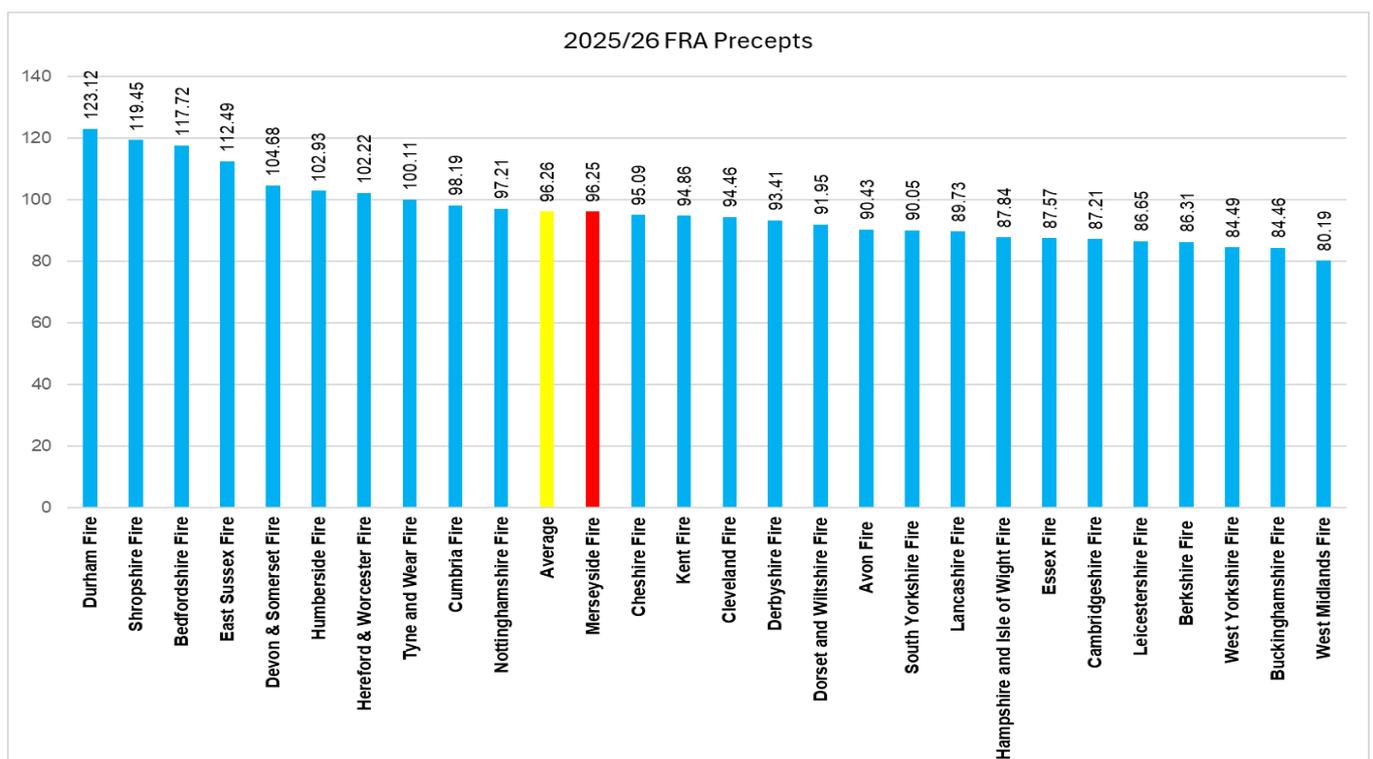
31. In the November 2024 Local Government Finance Statement, the government acknowledged that the current funding system is obsolete and failing, having lacked a significant update since 2013/14. Consequently, they committed to a fundamental overhaul of how local authorities are financed, focusing on directing resources to the areas with the greatest need.
32. The government proposed the 'Fair Funding Review 2.0', conducting a consultation from June to August 2025. When asked for feedback on the Fire and Rescue Formula design, only 64 of the 440 total participants provided a definitive stance.
33. The feedback breakdown for the Fire Formula was:
- a. Agreed: 25 respondents (6%)
  - b. Disagreed: 39 respondents (9%)
  - c. Neutral: 63 respondents (14%)
  - d. No Comment/Did Not Answer: 313 respondents (71%)

34. Following the consultation, the Government confirmed it will keep the existing funding formula for fire and rescue services, although it will be refreshed using the latest data and population projections. To safeguard budgets, standalone authorities will receive a real-terms funding floor throughout the multi-year settlement. Looking ahead, the government pledged to partner with the fire sector for a full-scale review of the entire formula's methodology in the medium term.
35. In November 2025 the Government published its Local Government Finance Policy Statement for 2026/2027 to 2028/2029, marking the first multi-year financial settlement for English councils in over a decade. The settlement provides fixed funding envelopes for the next three financial years, allowing the Authority to transition from year-to-year planning to long-term financial planning.
36. The settlement also introduced funding protection for standalone Fire and Rescue Authorities, a new "**real-terms funding floor**" has been introduced. This floor ensures their 2025/2026 income is protected in real terms throughout the multi-year period, **provided standalone Fire and Rescue Authorities take up the £5.00 per annum precept flexibility**.
37. The funding floor protection is 3.8% for 2026/27 (based on post-council tax Core Spending Power), with the GDP deflator to be used for the following years. As a result, our funding for 2026/27 will increase by £408k compared to the Provisional Settlement figures.
38. **2026/2027 Government Fair Funding Assessment** - The Governments Fair Funding Assessment for the 2026/2027 financial year identifies the following adjustments for the Authority:
- **Baseline Funding Level:** A reduction of £2.167 million, representing a 9.8% decrease on the 2025/2026 amount.
  - **Revenue Support Grant:** An uplift of £7.882 million, equivalent to a 46.6% increase on the 2025/2026 amount.
  - **Business Rates Multiplier (Compensation for Under-Indexing):** A total reduction of £5.095 million (100% decrease), on the 2025/26 amount.
  - **National Insurance Grant:** A total reduction of £0.425 million (100% decrease), on the 2025/26 amount.
  - **Transitional Protection:** New Fire & Rescue real terms floor increase of £0.408 million (100%), on the 2025/26 amount.
  - **Net Position:** A marginal net increase in the Fair Funding Assessment of £0.603 million (0.135%), on the 2025/26 amount.
39. **Provisional Fair Funding Assessment (2027/28 onwards)** – The provisional outlook for subsequent years is as follows:

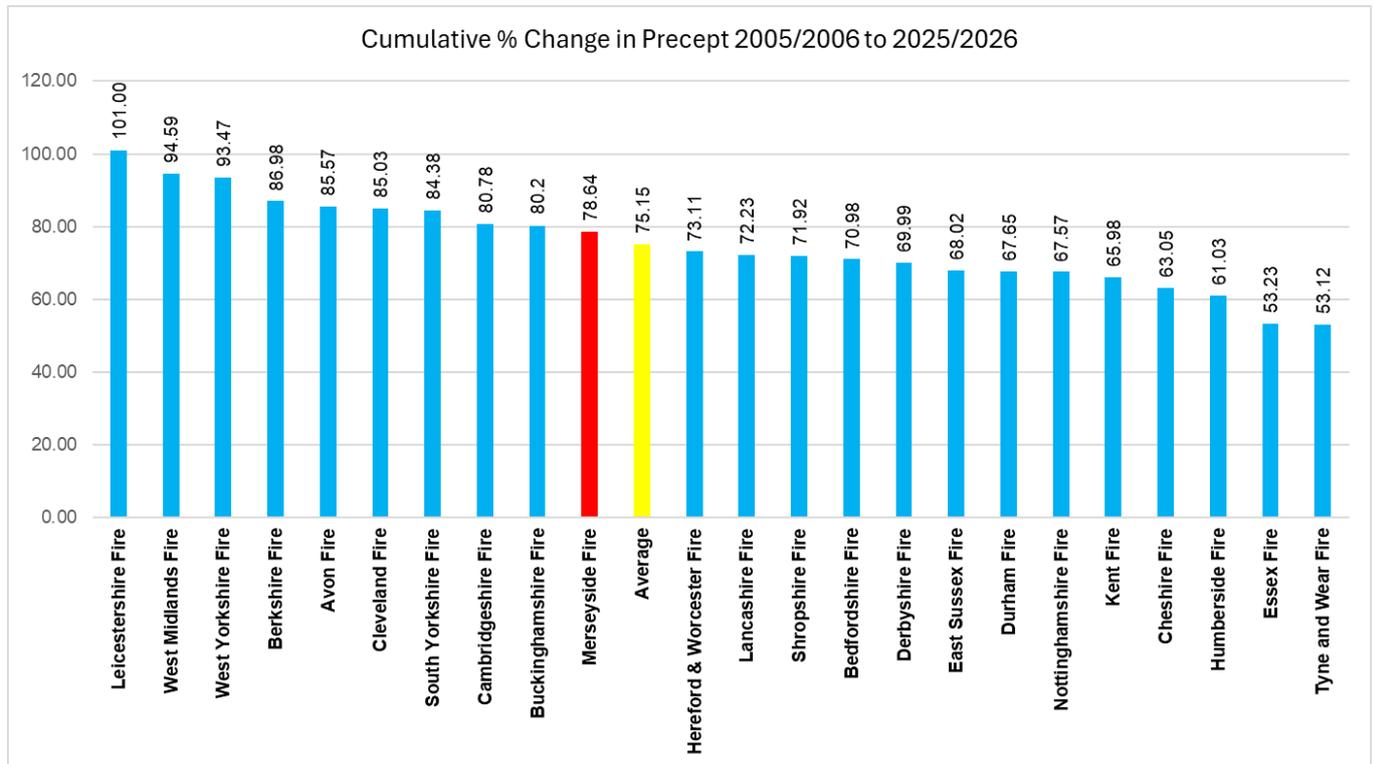
- **Baseline Funding Level:** Projected increases of £0.457 million in 2027/2028 and £0.411 million in 2028/2029.
- **Revenue Support Grant:** Forecast reductions of £0.928 million in 2027/2028 and £1.068 million in 2028/2029.
- **Transitional Protection:** The Authority will not receive any transitional protection within 2027/2028 and 2028/2029 (reduction of £0.408 million)
- **Net Fiscal Impact:** An anticipated net decrease in the Fair Funding Assessment of £0.879 million in 2027/28 and £0.657 million in 2028/29. Total net decrease from 2026/27 of £1.536 million.
- **Medium-Term Assumptions:** The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) assumes a 1% annual growth rate for both Baseline Funding and the Revenue Support Grant from 2029/30 onwards.

### Council Tax:

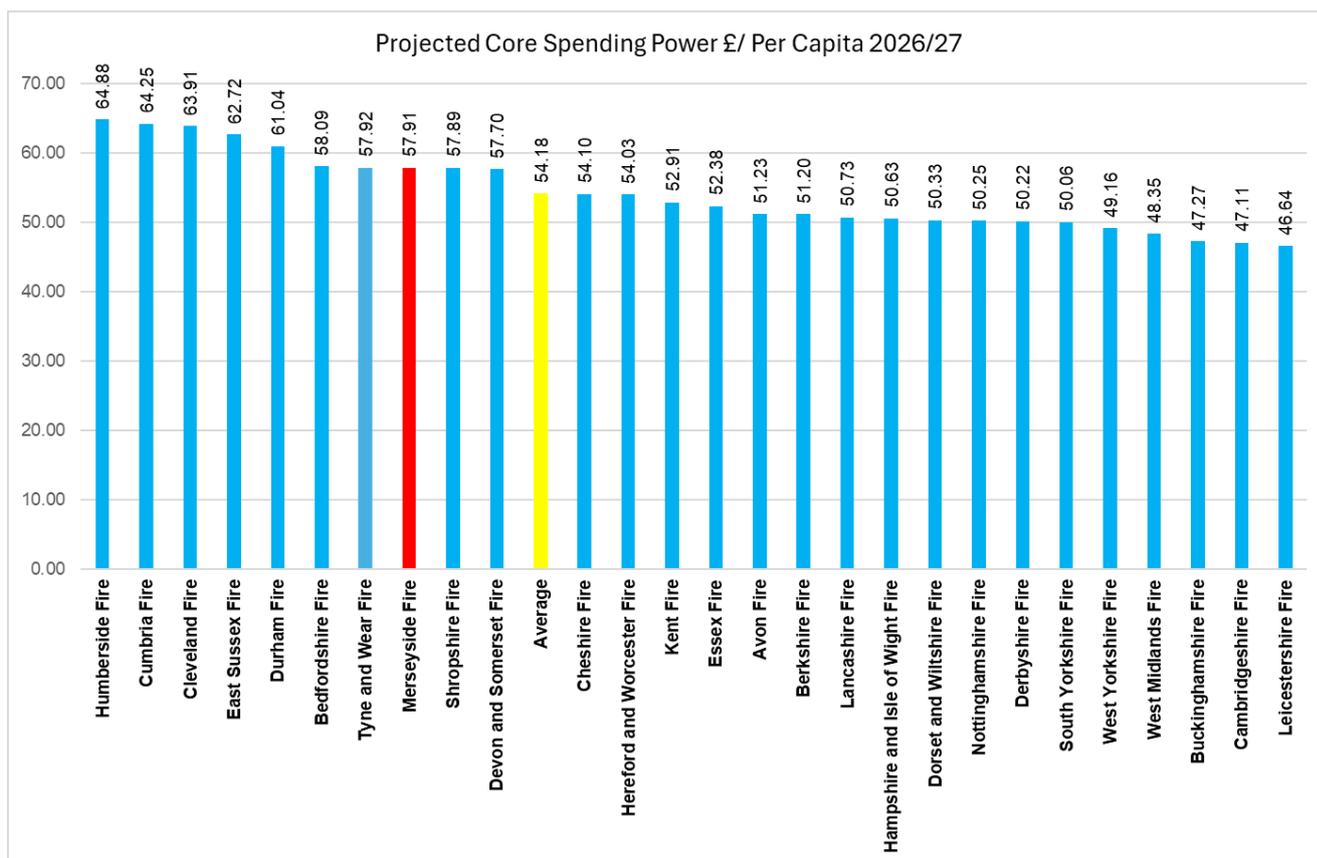
40. The level of council tax yield is dictated by the number of properties and the charge level on each. Each year, the billing authorities provide the Authority with the estimated Band “D” equivalent tax base, which is then used to calculate the expected council tax income based on a Band D Precept charge. The Authority then notifies each billing authority of the Precept to charge each property band and the forecast income yield that the billing authority must pay the Authority.
41. The Authority’s current 2025/2026 Band D Council Tax of £96.25 is slightly below the FRS national average of £96.26, as shown in the bar chart below. The proposed increase of £5.00 to £101.25 in 2026/2027 is unlikely to change this position:



42. Over the past 20 years, when compared to the other FRA's, Merseyside is slightly above the national average for cumulative council tax increases:



43. Despite recent growth in the Authority's tax base - which boosts income by generating more revenue for every £1 of "Band D" council tax charged - our core spending per household remains high compared to similar authorities. "Core Spending" is the Government estimate of our total budget, combining central funding with projected council tax and tax base increases. The table overleaf outlines the projected core spending power / per capita as outlined in the 2026/2027 finance settlement data produced by the Government:



44. The updated MTFP assumes the Authority will increase the precept by £5.00 per Band D property in 2026/2027, a level that avoids the requirement for a referendum. This £5.00 increase is also assumed for 2027/2028 and 2028/2029, followed by an assumed 2% annual increase for the final two years of the plan.
45. In addition, the 2026/2027 tax base increased by 2.05%, which is 1.55% higher than anticipated in the current MTFP. The proposed MTFP assumes a 0.5% annual increase in the tax base for all future years.
46. Combined, the council tax base and precept increases will result in a total Council Tax yield of £2.822m.
47. While the Authority may increase the 2026/27 precept by more than £5.00, any such increase would be subject to a local referendum. Should the electorate vote against the increase, the Authority would be required to produce a revised budget and incur re-billing costs for all districts, estimated at over £1m.

#### **Council Tax and Business Rates - Collection Fund**

48. Any variation between the estimated yield of council tax and locally retained business rates income and the actual collected by the billing authorities is adjusted for in the following year. Any deficit is re-paid to the billing authority, and any surplus is paid to the Authority.
49. The Council Tax Collection Fund forecasts a surplus of £0.109m.

50. The Business Rates Collection Fund forecasts a surplus of £0.028m.

51. Overall, the Collection Fund has a surplus of £0.137m.

**Pay:**

52. The previous MTFP assumed a 2.5% annual pay award for 2025/2026 and subsequent years. However, the proposed 2026/2027 MTFP has been updated to reflect the impact of actual 2025/26 settlements, which exceeded the budget. The firefighter pay award (Grey Book) was agreed at 3.2% effective from 1 July 2025, representing a pressure of 0.7% (£330k) above the original budget. Similarly, the non-operational pay award (Green Book) was settled at 3.2% effective from 1 April 2025, which was 0.7% (£100k) above the budgeted provision.

53. For 2026/2027, the pay award assumption has been increased from 2.5% to 3.0% for both firefighter and non-operational staff, at a projected cost of £254k (part-year) and £314k (full-year). The MTFP continues to assume future pay awards of 2.5% per annum from 2027/2028 onwards.

**Amendments to the current MTFP Assumptions:**

54. As well as the changes identified above to the current MTFP, **Section G** of this report outlines all the changes in the proposed new MTFP in more detail.

**Updated 2026/2027 – 2030/2031 MTFP:**

55. This report provides the Authority with an updated five-year MTFP for 2026/2027 – 2030/2031. It reflects the impact of the Government's first multi-year financial settlement in a decade (covering 2026/27 to 2028/29) along with updated tax yields and strategic assumptions from the Budget Strategy Day. The proposed plan is attached as appendix C and is summarised below.

<b>Proposed 2026/27 - 2030/31 MTFP</b>					
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Current 2025/26 MTFP Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>1,139</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>1,442</b>
<b>2025/26 MTFP Issues to build in future MTFP:-</b>					
Impact of the 2025/26 Grey Book Pay Award (Increase of 0.70%)	330	330	330	330	330
Impact of the 2025/26 Green Book Pay Award (Increase of 0.70%)	100	100	100	100	100
Historic Employers National Insurance Grant now consolidated within the Fair Funding Assessment	425	425	425	425	425
Impact 2026/27 Pay Award moving from 2.5% p.a. to 3% p.a.	254	314	314	314	314
Impact 2025 LGPS Actuarial Valuation reduction in employers pension contribution 17.9% - 5.9% 2026/27 to 2028/29 then assume only 50% of the saving for 2029/30 & 2030/31	-1,150	-1,150	-1,150	-575	-575
2030/31 Inflation Provision	0	0	0	0	1,796
Impact of Higher Prices (Inflation/Contingency)	622	784	953	957	957
2030/31 MRP/Interest - Additional year and Inflationary Impact on cost of Capital Goods	0	0	0	0	90
Contribution to Capital Reserve to fund Capital Programme and additional Inflationary Pressures	493	0	0	0	0
Unavoidable Growth net of Savings	476	425	282	600	480
Provision for the review of Establishment to meet Job Evaluation / Recruitment / Retention / Growth Challenges	400	300	300	300	300
Historic Business Rates Grant compensation for under-indexation of tax rates now consolidated within the Fair Funding Assessment	5,095	5,095	5,095	5,095	5,095
Transitional Protection for 2026/27 - Fire and Rescue real terms floor 3.8%	-408				
Increase in Fair Funding Assessment in 2026/27 - 2028/29 above the assumed MTFP	-5,325	-4,460	-3,406	-3,439	-3,879
Council Tax Precept	-1,858	-3,122	-4,382	-4,493	-5,669
Collection Fund Change	-137				
SFA Local Business Rate Estimate Adjustment	34				
Summary of impact of changes to 2026/27 MTFP	<b>-650</b>	<b>-959</b>	<b>-1,139</b>	<b>-386</b>	<b>-237</b>
<b>Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,056</b>	<b>1,205</b>

56. The MTFP delivers a balanced financial position in 2026/2027 – 2028/29 but outlines a potential financial challenge from 2029/2030. Members are asked to note this at this point due to the significant uncertainty over future Government funding, council tax base and precept increases, pay awards and inflation.

**Allocation of Resources:**

57. If any organisation wants to be successful, its budget setting and medium-term financial plan must allocate resources to support its key strategic aims and priorities.
58. The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) is the key driver in allocating the Authority's resources in response to the risks facing Merseyside. The 2026/2027 MTFP includes the budget (revenue and capital) to support CRMP 2024 - 2027.
59. The financial plan also seeks to aim the allocation of resources to deliver the Authority's Vision and Purpose:-

**Our Vision:**

To be the best Fire and Rescue Service in the UK.  
One team, putting its communities first.

**Our Purpose:**

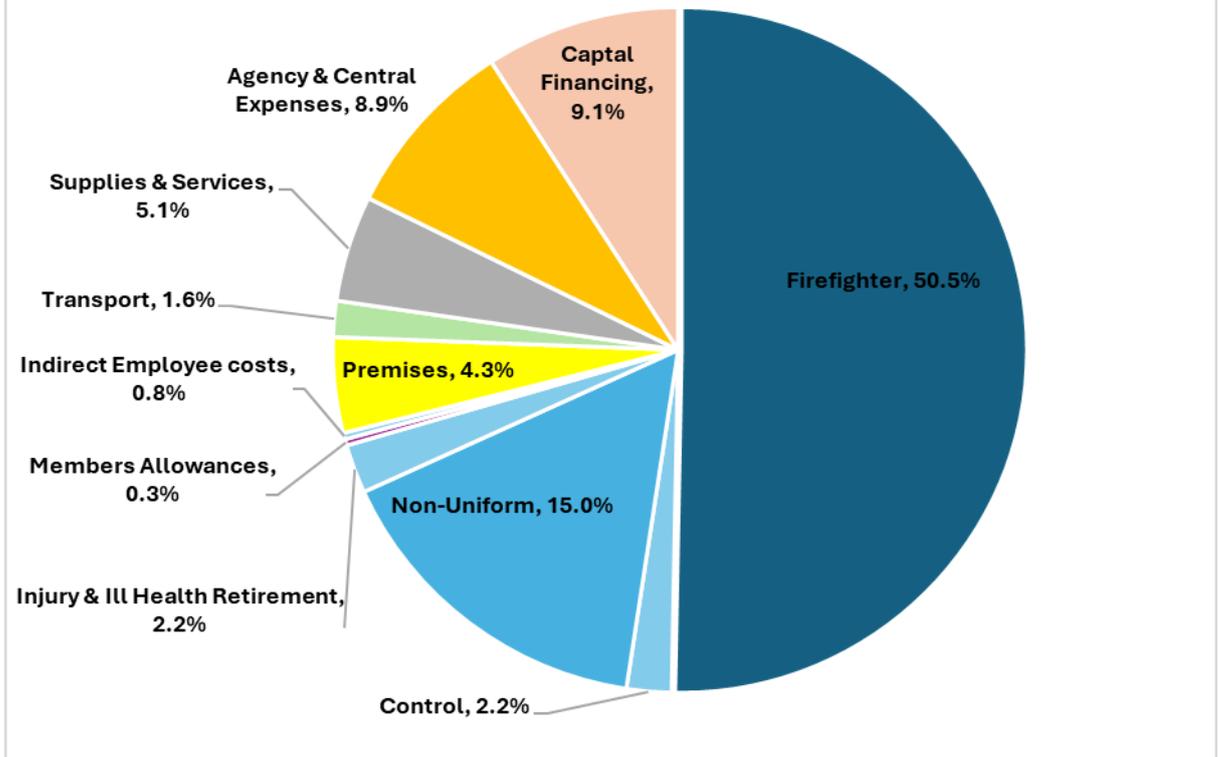
Here to serve. Here to protect. Here to keep you safe.

60. The updated 2026/2027 MTFP will support the delivery of the CRMP and the Authority's key strategic aims and priorities.

**Analysis of the Budget Allocation by Service and Spend type:**

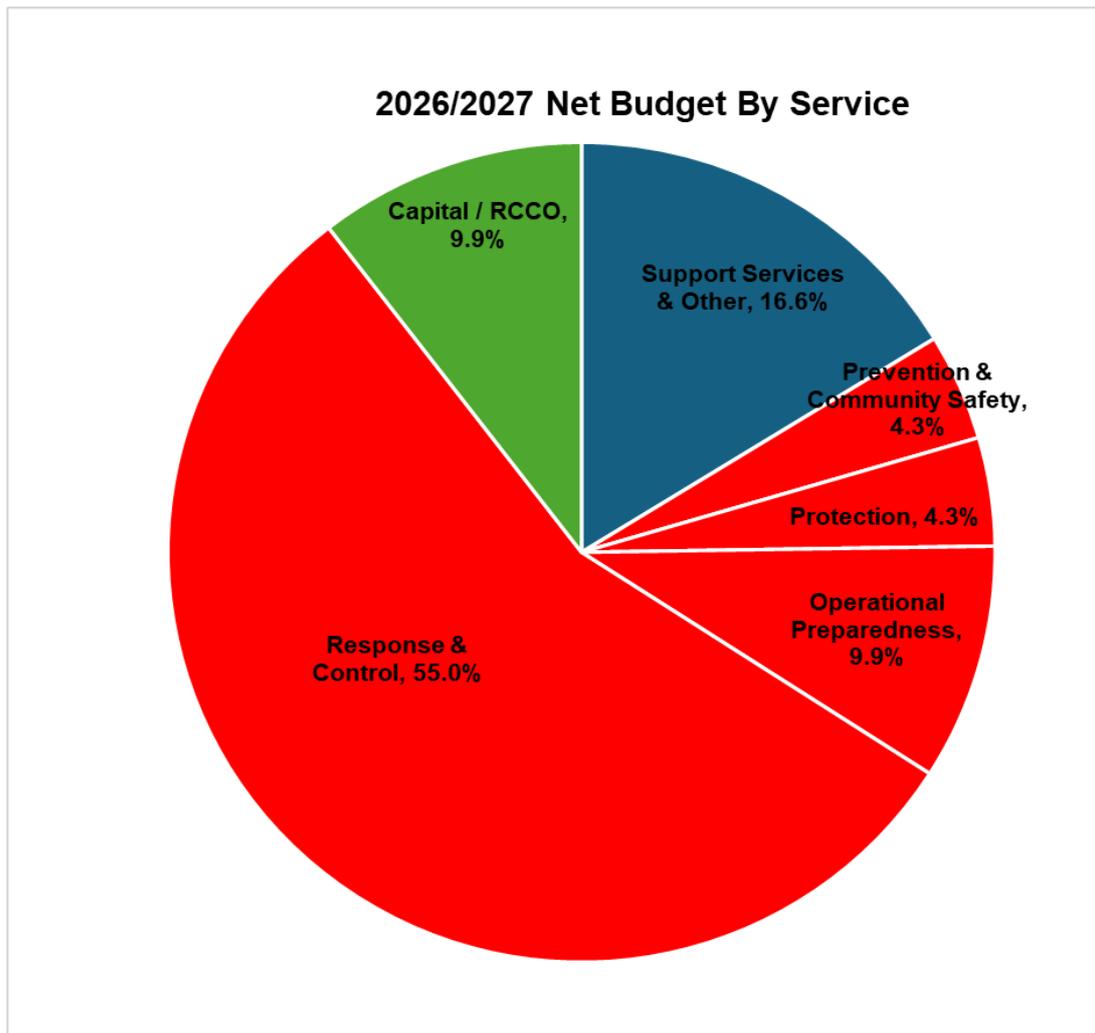
61. An analysis of the planned revenue expenditure outlines that it is predominantly employee-related (71%). The pie chart overleaf analyses the revenue expenditure over the different main subjective headings (the blue sections relate to employee costs):

**Analysis of 2026/2027 Gross Revenue Budget (excl. National Resilience Spend)**



A complete subjective analysis of the base budget for 2026/2027 is set out in **Appendix A**. A subjective analysis is only part of the overall view on spending. To assist Members, the same data is shown in a “thematic” view in the following paragraphs and is based upon the Service’s strategic objectives.

62. The Authority has an excellent track record of investing in line with its corporate priorities. The pie chart below outlines that most expenditure, 55.0%, goes on emergency and specialist response. In addition, 9.9% goes on Operational Preparedness and 8.6% on Protection and Prevention. Therefore, 73.5% of expenditure is on the “front line” services. The 9.9% on capital costs relate mainly to previous investments in front line assets, fire stations, vehicles and equipment. The remaining 16.6% is on support and operational enabling services.



Looking in more detail at each area, the expenditure includes:

#### Operational Response & Control (Total £47.3m)

- Service delivery and emergency response through its 21 fire stations and control room.
- Specialist capabilities such as the Search and Rescue Team.
- Invested in staff safety – procured state of the art fire kit, helmets, boots, breathing apparatus and appliances, ensuring the service maintains safe effective firefighters.
- Health & Safety & Assurance.
- Delivering a HFSC programme.
- Marine Rescue Unit to support safety on the River Mersey.

#### Prevention (Total £3.7m)

- Community Prevention work and youth engagement.
- Employment of specialist Advocates and continuation of the King's Trust and other programmes.
- Fire Service Direct.
- Purchase and installation of smoke alarms per annum (**capital expenditure**).

Protection (Total £3.7m)

- Protection Response Officers.
- Enforcement & Prosecution.
- ICT Information systems.

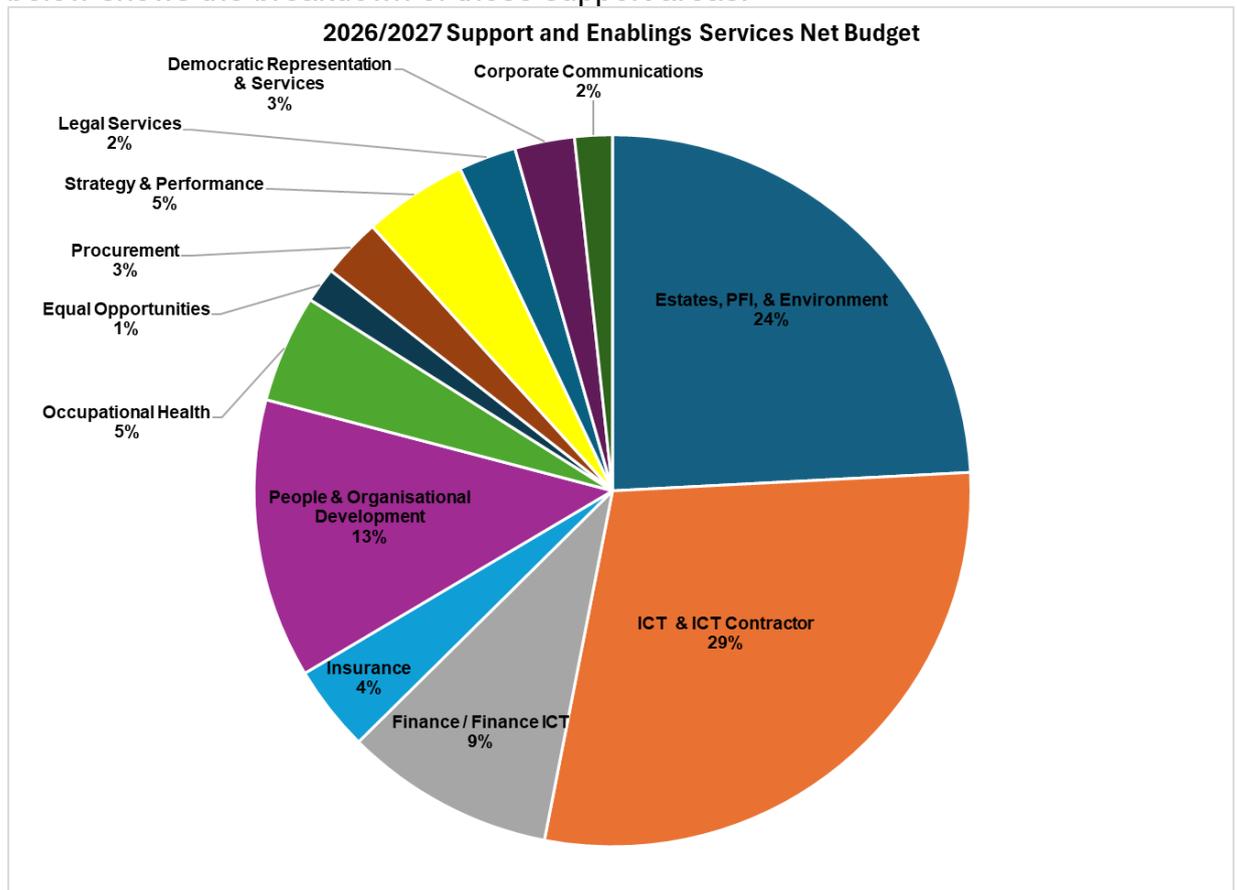
Operational Preparedness (Total £8.5m)

The investment delivers various services that help prepare for a full range of possible incidents in Merseyside and ensure Firefighter safety.

- Training Delivery
- Operational Planning and Policy
- Contingency Planning
- Training and Development Academy
- Operational Equipment Team
- Water Section
- Health and Safety Department
- Transport/Fleet Management – to keep vehicles operating effectively
- Workshops
- National Operational Guidance Review Team

Support Services & Enabling Services (Total £14.4m)

The investment in support services represents 16.6% of the budget. The pie chart below shows the breakdown of those support areas:



It should be noted that many of the support and enabling services are key

“front line” elements of a modern FRA. For example:

- Estates – includes the running costs of buildings, including 21 Community Fire Stations,
- ICT – includes the cost of the ICT for Fire Control and stations,
- Occupational Health – to support staff wellbeing and manage attendance.

In addition, some support functions are unavoidable for any organisation:

- Insurance - to cover 3<sup>rd</sup> party, vehicle, public and employer liabilities,
- Legal, Payroll, Accountancy, Human Resources, Procurement, etc., to support the organisation in paying its staff and suppliers and ensuring activities are carried out within the relevant laws.

The cost of governance in relation to elected members is also contained within support and other costs.

## C) CAPITAL STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME

63. Capital is considered first in this report so that Members can consider the revenue impacts of capital investment and borrowing decisions as part of the revenue budget and council tax considerations. The proposed capital investment contributes to the future provision of operational and other Authority services as it facilitates the required infrastructure investment in, property, ICT, vehicles, and operational equipment needed by the Service to deliver future day to day activities. ***The following sections (C) to (F) anticipate the Authority's agreement to the proposed capital programme and its financing.***
64. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004, the Local Government Act 2003 replaced the previous regime of capital controls with the Prudential System for Capital Finance. Local Authorities are free to decide how much they can afford to borrow for capital purposes, subject to various safeguards. The Government has reserve powers to limit an authority's borrowing if it believes it to be unaffordable or in times of public spending restraint. A key part of the revised capital system is the CIPFA "Prudential Code for Local Authority Capital Finance," which provides a framework of decision-making under which authorities will decide their capital investment and financing plans and set limits for borrowing.
65. Authorities will be required to 'have regard to' the "Prudential Code" when setting their future budgets and Council Tax levels - which in practice means they would need to have very good reasons not to comply. The overriding objective of the "Prudential Code" is to ensure that the capital investment plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent, sustainable, and follow good practices.

### **Key Features of the Prudential Code**

66. The main operational requirements of the code:
- **Approval of Indicators:** The full Authority must determine and approve a suite of Prudential Indicators and limits for its capital plans during the annual budget process. These limits may only be revised mid-year by the full Authority. The mandatory indicators are shown in Section E.
  - **Monitoring and Reporting:** These indicators and limits must be monitored throughout the financial year, with actual outturn figures reported formally to the Authority.
  - **Medium-Term Planning:** The Authority must maintain capital and revenue plans covering at least **three future years**. This includes three-year estimates of future Council Tax, accounting for the impact of the proposed capital programme.
  - **The Authorised Limit for Debt:** The Authority is statutorily required to set an **Authorised Limit** for its total external debt (including borrowing

and other long-term liabilities). This limit is a legal boundary that may not be exceeded.

- **Treasury Management Alignment:** All limits relating to treasury management matters must be considered as part of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Report.
67. Fundamentally, the objective of the Code is that the total of an Authority's capital investment remains within sustainable limits, following consideration of the impact on the "bottom line" Council Tax. This is ultimately determined by a judgement about what Members consider an acceptable level of Council Tax.
68. Proposals for capital investment are aligned to Authority and Service priorities. The starting point for this programme has been an assessment of the capital investment requirements for the Authority for future years based on needs identified by the various expert professionals in areas like buildings, vehicles, ICT, and operational equipment. Initial bids were requested and through an iterative process, and officers have modified the programme taking into account the: -
- Updated five-year asset management plans (the asset management plans can be found on today's Authority agenda).
  - Service requirements, particularly investments required to support and deliver the CRMP.
  - Need to adopt a prudential approach to capital borrowing under the new regime, being mindful of affordability, prudence, and sustainability and, in particular, the impact on Council Tax levels.
69. The Authority produces a rolling five-year capital programme to manage major capital schemes each financial year. Owing to the nature of capital expenditure, many schemes span more than one financial year, so the programme is a rolling programme covering five future financial years.
70. Although the proposed capital programme covers a five-year period, an extended term view of future capital investment exists for assets with a significantly longer life. This is true specifically for property investment as these assets may have a +50-year asset life. Property asset management objectives exist to identify planned spend over a +10-year period. In addition, fire appliances and specialist vehicles have a 10 to 16 year asset life, and a replacement strategy ensures the Authority maintains the appropriate levels of operational capability. The vehicle replacement strategy ensures appliance and specialist vehicle refresh is spread over several years to allow flexibility on model options and to keep pace with new technology and innovations in design and development.
71. The proposed £44.195m five-year programme set out in Appendix B is summarised in the table overleaf. This table also identifies programme funding and a resultant borrowing requirement of £42.320m.

**Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
Buildings & Land	9,648,800	4,357,000	2,573,300	993,500	1,102,500	622,500
Fire Safety	3,175,000	635,000	635,000	635,000	635,000	635,000
ICT	11,139,900	2,256,000	978,200	2,961,400	3,707,900	1,236,400
NRAT Resilience Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operational Equipment & Hydrants	6,881,500	3,518,000	693,000	902,000	761,000	1,007,500
Vehicles	13,349,900	4,981,000	1,663,900	690,000	3,465,000	2,550,000
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>44,195,100</b>	<b>15,747,000</b>	<b>6,543,400</b>	<b>6,181,900</b>	<b>9,671,400</b>	<b>6,051,400</b>
<b>Financing Available</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>	<b>2028/29</b>	<b>2029/30</b>	<b>2029/30</b>
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital Receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0
RCCO	1,875,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000
Capital Reserves	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Non Borrowing	1,875,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000
Unsupported Borrowing	42,320,100	15,372,000	6,168,400	5,806,900	9,296,400	5,676,400
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>44,195,100</b>	<b>15,747,000</b>	<b>6,543,400</b>	<b>6,181,900</b>	<b>9,671,400</b>	<b>6,051,400</b>

72. The updated capital programme includes new schemes and growth of existing schemes, these have increased the overall expenditure by £8.912m. The table below summarises the proposed changes:

**New Starts 2026/27 - 2030/31**

Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
Building/Land	1,422,500	800,000	0	0	0	622,500
Fire Safety	635,000	0	0	0	0	635,000
ICT	2,722,900	24,000	27,500	1,037,500	397,500	1,236,400
Operational Equipment & Hydrants	1,057,500	0	0	0	50,000	1,007,500
Vehicles	3,075,000	0	0	0	525,000	2,550,000
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>8,912,900</b>	<b>824,000</b>	<b>27,500</b>	<b>1,037,500</b>	<b>972,500</b>	<b>6,051,400</b>
<b>Financing Available</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>	<b>2028/29</b>	<b>2029/30</b>
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Total Non Borrowing	375,000	0	0	0	0	375,000
Unsupported Borrowing	8,537,900	824,000	27,500	1,037,500	972,500	5,676,400
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>8,912,900</b>	<b>824,000</b>	<b>27,500</b>	<b>1,037,500</b>	<b>972,500</b>	<b>6,051,400</b>

73. Of the £8.912m planned increase:

- a. Adding the “extra year” to the programme, 2030/2031, adds £6.051m
- b. New 2026/2027 – 2029/2030 proposals including Growth//New Schemes/Savings add £2.861m. The key items are for investment in:
  - Refurbishment of Kirkby £0.800m
  - Replacement of Control Computer Aided Despatch (CAD) £1.000m
  - PIPS Application Upgrade £0.120m
  - Cradlepoint replacing PSTN lines on stations £0.150m
  - Windows 11 Hardware Upgrade £0.100m
  - Operational Equipment – Fire Blankets Car Fires £0.050m

- Ancillary Vehicles £0.525m

74. The £8.912m of new planned capital spending requires unsupported additional borrowing of £8.537m, and this commitment has been built into the proposed MTFP.
75. **Appendix B** comprehensively analyses the proposed 5-year capital programme. The main areas of capital programme expenditure are summarised below: -

**a. Building Investment Strategy (£9.648m):**

The estate comprises 21 fire stations, a Training and Development Academy (TDA), a Service Headquarters including Fire and Rescue Control, a Marine Rescue Unit, Engineering Centre and three houses used by firefighters who work our Low Level of Activity and Risk (LLAR) duty system.

The capital programme reflects the funding required to replace, maintain and enhance the current estate portfolio and, when possible, seeks to attract external funding or specific contributions (capital grants, capital receipts, capital reserves) to reduce the level of borrowing required. The Estates Team maintain and revise a 5-year property asset management plan supported by a 10-year property strategy. The proposed capital programme is consistent with the priority areas contained within the plan.

Major refurbishment works of £4.727m at fire stations and other property works are planned over the programme period, including major refurbishments of Kirkby and Wallasey fire stations and other refurbishments including City Centre, Kensington and Toxteth fire stations and service headquarters.

General station upgrade work, £2.016m, is planned over the programme period, including investment in station roofs and canopy replacements, appliance room door repairs, tower improvements, appliance room floor repairs and sanitary accommodation refurbishments.

The balance, £2.905m, relates to other property work on schemes such as energy conservation, boiler replacements, access compliance and furniture replacement.

**b. Fire Safety (Community Risk Management) (£3.175m)**

Smoke alarms and sprinkler systems are being classed as capital expenditure per Government guidance. This follows the awarding of historic capital grants by the (then) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister towards the purchase cost of such items in financial years 2004/05 through to 2007/08. The current policy is to capitalise the installation costs of smoke alarms, estimated at £1.875m over the period. However, this expenditure is not funded through borrowing but financed in the year by a revenue contribution to capital. The Capital Programme includes £1.300m for smoke alarms and deaf alarms.

**c. ICT – Investing in line with the ICT Strategy (£11.139m)**

In line with the increasing use of technology to improve the service, there is a significant investment in ICT within the programme. The most significant investments are:

- ICT Software £2.576m including licenses, security Information and event management software and Microsoft agreements
- Planned replacement of ICT Hardware including PC's, monitors, AV equipment and peripherals £1.926m
- ICT Servers including Mitel Server upgrade and Virtualisation refresh £1.190m
- ICT Network replacement and growth including 5 year Core Network Switch/Router upgrade £1.345m
- Operational ICT Equipment, including refresh of Mobile Data Terminals on front line vehicles and tough pad asset refresh £0.895m
- ICT Security including the replacement of PfSense Firewalls £0.170m
- Other applications and ICT schemes including Command & Control Suite and Computer Aided Dispatch replacement £3.037m

#### **d. Operational Equipment & Hydrants (£6.881m)**

Provision is also made to ensure that a modern fire and rescue service can be delivered, and firefighters kept safe; in particular, provision is made for investment in specialist rescue equipment and new breathing apparatus such as -

- Hydraulic rescue equipment replacement programme £0.140m
- Pod Equipment including demountable unit refurbishment £0.355m
- Improvements to Fleet £0.500m
- Breathing Apparatus replacement programme £3.045m
- Radiation/Gas Detection Equipment £0.132m
- Bulk Foam Equipment £0.110m
- Search and Rescue equipment £0.278m
- Gas detection Equipment £0.148m
- Water Rescue Equipment £0.136m
- CCTV Equipment £0.133m
- Operational Ladders £0.115m
- Water Delivery Hoses £0.122m
- Electrical Equipment £0.148m
- Operational Drones £0.107m
- Emerging Technologies £0.250m
- Communications £0.280m
- Other Specialist Equipment £0.697m
- Installation of new or replacement hydrants per our water strategy, £0.185m.

#### **e. Vehicle Replacement Strategy (£13.349m)**

The vehicle asset management plan elsewhere on today's agenda has identified the vehicle needs of the Authority and the required replacement and procurement strategy. The proposed capital programme reflects the ask within the asset management plan: -

- a. Fire Appliances - £6.479m

The Authority has developed an appliance replacement strategy based on the economic life of an appliance. Papa 1 and Papa 2 Pumping Appliances will be replaced at 10 years. This then creates a roll down process of the refreshed appliances to move to Papa 3, reserve and support appliances positions. This will enable MFRS to achieve a life period for Papa 3 and reserve appliances of no more than 16 years and support appliances of no more than 19 years. The plan provides for 14 new appliances

b. Specialist Vehicles - £3.014m

There is a need to make provision for the purchase of specialist vehicles to support the wider range of roles for the fire and rescue service, including:

- Incident Command Unit (ICU) (1)
- Prime Movers (4)
- POD Long Term capability management (1)
- Forklift Truck (1)
- Water Rescue Unit (1)
- BA Support Pod (1)
- Crane Lorry (1)
- Wildfire Appliance (2)
- Curtain Sided Truck (1)
- Welfare Vehicle (1)
- Tele Handler Truck (1)
- Youth Engagement vehicle (1)
- Water Bowser Appliance (1)

c. Ancillary Vehicles – £3.165m

Provision is included for the phased renewal of the ancillary vehicle fleet.

d. Marine Rescue Boats - £0.458m

e. Workshop Equipment - £0.233m

**Funding:**

76. A mixture of specific funding sources and borrowing will fund the proposed capital spend:
77. **Capital receipts:** - these are generally proceeds from the sale of assets. Such receipts may be used to reduce an Authority's outstanding debt or reinvested in capital infrastructure. The Authority typically uses capital receipts to fund new capital investment, with minimal allocation toward debt repayment unless specifically required by regulation.
78. **Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO):** Capital spending can be funded by a contribution from the approved revenue budget. The proposed capital

programme includes an annual RCCO of £0.375m, which comes from the “freed-up” employee budget following the capitalisation of smoke alarm installation costs (salary costs).

79. **Borrowing:** Under the Prudential Framework, local authorities have the power to determine their own levels of affordable borrowing. However, the Government retains reserve powers under the Local Government Act 2003 to impose national limits or specific restrictions on an Authority’s borrowing if it is deemed unaffordable or for broader national economic reasons. Following the application of specific funding, the proposed capital programme requires £42.320m in "unsupported" prudential borrowing. The revenue budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) include adequate provision to meet the future debt-servicing costs associated with this requirement.
80. **Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP):** When the Authority borrows to fund capital expenditure, it is a statutory requirement to make a "prudent" provision from revenue for the repayment of that debt, alongside interest costs. The Authority’s methodology for this is defined by the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, the Authority must approve an annual MRP Statement. Section D of this report outlines the proposed policy and calculation methodology for the period 2026/27 to 2030/31 for Member approval. More information on the impact on the Capital Programme is shown in the section on Prudential Indicators (see Section E).

## (D) MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STATEMENT

81. Under the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Authority is statutorily required to set aside a prudent sum of money each year to reduce its overall debt; this is known as the **Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)**. While the 2003 Regulations originally prescribed specific calculation methods, the system was moved to a 'prudent duty' basis in 2008.
82. This framework was further strengthened by the 2024 Amendment Regulations and the 5th Edition of Statutory Guidance, effective for financial years commencing 1 April 2025. These updates clarify that authorities cannot exclude any portion of their Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) from MRP calculations and strictly prohibit the use of capital receipts as a direct replacement for the required revenue charge. The Authority must continue to approve an annual MRP Policy Statement prior to the start of each financial year, ensuring its debt repayment remains prudent and compliant with the latest statutory requirements.
83. Statutory guidance defines a 'prudent' MRP as being calculated using one of the following principles:
- a. **Asset Life Method:** Based over a period reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure or asset provides benefits.
  - b. **Regulatory Method:** For historical borrowing originally supported by government grant, a period commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant (typically equating to a 4% reducing balance methodology).
84. The statutory guidance sets out four options for calculating MRP. As the government no longer issues 'Supported Borrowing', Options 1 and 2 are restricted to historical debt, leaving Options 3 and 4 for all new borrowing:
1. **Regulatory Method** – This allows local authorities to continue calculating MRP in line with the minimum existing statutory charge of 4% of outstanding debt related to supported borrowing only. This option is available for all capital expenditure incurred before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.
  2. **Capital Financing Requirement Method** – This is very similar to the regulatory method, but it does not take into account the adjustment that ensures authorities do not pay more MRP than under the previous capital regulatory regimes. This method may not be appropriate for most authorities as it would result in a higher level of provision than option 1.
  3. **Asset Life Method** – MRP is determined by reference to the life of the asset, and the amount is either based on:
    - i. equal instalments method. This generates a series of equal annual amounts over the life of each asset financed from borrowing, or

- ii. annuity method. This method links the MRP to the flow of benefits from an asset where the benefit is expected to increase in later years.
4. **Depreciation Method** - MRP is to be equal to the provision required in accordance with depreciation accounting in respect of the asset on which expenditure has been financed by borrowing. This option is available to both supported and unsupported borrowing in determining the MRP requirement.
85. Statutory guidance indicates that for finance leases and on-balance sheet Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts, the MRP requirement is satisfied by a charge equal to the element of the rental or unitary charge that writes down the balance sheet liability under proper accounting practices. This is effectively a modified version of the asset life-annuity method, ensuring the impact on the revenue account is neutral as the MRP matches the principal repayment embedded within the agreement.
86. The 2026/27 MRP is determined by the actual level of the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) at the end of 2025/26. It is recommended that the Authority adopt the following strategy for 2026/27:
- a. Post-2008 Unsupported Borrowing: For all capital expenditure incurred after 1 April 2008 financed by unsupported (prudential) borrowing, MRP will be calculated using the Asset Life Method (Equal Instalments).
  - b. Finance Leases and PFI: For credit arrangements, including on-balance sheet leasing and PFI contracts, the MRP charge shall be equal to the principal element of the annual rental or unitary charge.
  - c. IFRS 16 Transition: For former operating leases brought onto the balance sheet under IFRS 16, MRP will be adjusted to ensure the total charge over the lease term reflects the value of the right-of-use asset recognised at transition.
87. For all capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 and funded via supported borrowing, the Authority calculates MRP using a straight-line (equal instalment) method over a period of up to 40 years (extending to 50 years for land). The Director of Finance and Procurement consider this a prudent methodology as it ensures all historical debt is fully extinguished over a finite timeframe, rather than the perpetual 'reducing balance' approach of the 4% Regulatory Method.
88. The options detailed above satisfy the statutory requirement for MRP to be deemed 'prudent' while providing long-term certainty and predictability for the revenue budget. The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) outlined in this report fully incorporates the financial impact of the Authority's proposed MRP policy.
89. In addition, it is proposed that any revenue budget savings identified in a year may be used to make additional one-off MRP payments if the overall financial position of the Authority in that year remains consistent with the approved financial plan.

90. Interest on loans to fund capital expenditure is estimated at £1.715m.
91. The proposed financial plan includes budget provision to meet the MRP and interest payments based on historic and planned future capital spend. In the past, the Authority has determined it can afford and sustain significant prudential borrowing to allow the required level of investment in the infrastructure and assets of the Authority to deliver a modern, well-equipped fire and rescue service.

## (E) PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT

92. Having formulated a draft Capital Programme, the Authority, in making final decisions upon that Capital Programme and Revenue Budget 2026/2027, will need to consider a report setting out a range of Prudential Indicators aimed at demonstrating the intended Investment Programme's affordability, prudence and impact upon Treasury Management activity and strategy.
93. It should be noted, however, that to provide those indicators, capital and revenue financial plans need to be prepared for each of the following three financial years, commencing with 2026/2027.
94. The financial plans prepared for the financial years 2027/2028 and 2028/2029 are not to be mistaken for approved budgets. They are, at this stage, only a guide for financial planning and, as such, subject to change as a result of decisions made by the Authority. However, such plans must be supported by an indication of future Council Tax. At this stage, an assumption of Council Tax increases of £5.00 in 2026/2027, 2027/2028 and 2028/29.
95. The Authority must demonstrate that its spending plans comply with the Prudential Code by publishing several performance indicators, known as the Prudential Indicators. ***Details of the prudential indicators for the Authority are provided below.***
96. The purpose of these indicators is to demonstrate that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable, and that the Authority has considered the proportionality of its investments relative to its financial capacity. To demonstrate this, the Authority will monitor the following mandatory indicators:
- a. **Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream:** Measures the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet borrowing and other long-term liability costs.
  - b. **Capital Financing Requirement (CFR):** Represents the Authority's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes.
  - c. **Liability Benchmark:** A graphical projection of the Authority's actual borrowing against its minimum need to borrow, identifying future refinancing or new borrowing requirements.
97. The prudential indicators for the Authority are: -
- **Capital Expenditure**  
The actual capital expenditure that was incurred in 2024/2025 and the estimates of capital expenditure to be incurred for the current and future years that are recommended for approval are:

	Actual 2024/25 £000,s	Estimate 2025/26 £000,s	Estimate 2026/27 £000,s	Estimate 2027/28 £000,s	Estimate 2028/29 £000,s	Estimate 2029/30 £000,s	Estimate 2030/31 £000,s
Capital Expenditure	13,790	10,955	15,747	6,543	6,182	9,671	6,051

It is important to remember capital costs are shown as the gross, net of any grants or contributions received to contribute towards the cost. More details on the capital programme are given elsewhere in the report (see Section C).

- **Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream**

Estimates of the ratio of capital financing costs to net revenue stream (excludes capital amounts met from Government grants and specific funding) for the actual figures for 2024/2025 and the current and future years are:

	Actual 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27	Estimate 2027/28	Estimate 2028/29	Estimate 2029/30	Estimate 2030/31
Ratio of Financing costs to Net Revenue Stream	10.15%	9.09%	5.95%	6.92%	7.46%	5.98%	5.98%

This shows that forecast debt financing costs will decrease from 10.15% down to approximately 6% by 2030/2031. This reflects the current policy of using internal cash (funds held as reserves, unapplied capital and revenue grants, etc.) to temporarily fund capital expenditure to be financed by borrowing. The Authority will need to borrow to fund the planned capital spend as the internal cash is expected to be committed by 2029/2030.

- **Effect on the Precept**

The estimate of the incremental impact of capital investment decisions proposed in this budget report, over and above capital investment decisions that the Authority has previously taken, are:

	Actual 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27	Estimate 2027/28	Estimate 2028/29	Estimate 2029/30	Estimate 2030/31
Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions.	-£7.05	£1.10	£2.82	-£0.11	£0.10	£1.97	£0.66

This indicator compares the capital programme set by the Authority in last year's budget process to the proposed revised capital programme submitted this year. It is intended to show the marginal impact of the overall capital programme and the decisions the Authority makes on the Council Tax levels. The re-phasing of expenditure from 2025/2026 into 2026/2027 approved during the year and the new starts in 2026/2027 – 2030/2031 explain the movement in the figures over this period.

98. The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) measures the Authority's underlying need to borrow for capital investment purposes.
99. Based on current commitments for 2025/2026 and the latest estimates of capital investment decisions in future years, the capital financing requirement forecast as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 and future years is as follows:

	Actual 31.3.25 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.26 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.27 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.28 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.29 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.30 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.31 £000,s
<b>Capital Financing Requirement (Excluding PFI &amp; MRD)</b>	<b>34,008</b>	<b>37,937</b>	<b>50,378</b>	<b>52,754</b>	<b>54,309</b>	<b>59,059</b>	<b>59,095</b>

In accordance with best practice, the Authority does not associate borrowing with particular items or types of expenditure. The Authority has, at any point in time, a number of positive and negative cash flows and manages its Treasury position in terms of its borrowings and investments per its approved Treasury Management Strategy and Practices. In day-to-day cash management, no distinction between revenue and capital cash can be made. External borrowing arises as a consequence of all the financial transactions of the Authority and not simply those arising from capital spending. In contrast, the capital financing requirement, CFR, reflects the Authority's underlying need to borrow for capital investment purposes.

100. CIPFA's *Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities* includes the following as a key indicator of prudence:

"In order to ensure that over the medium-term debt will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years."

101. The Authority had no difficulty in meeting this requirement as the Authority's CFR (excluding PFI) is expected to reach a maximum of £59.095m over the next 5 years, and the expected maximum debt position is £42.720m. The reason for the borrowing figure being lower than the CFR figure reflects the availability of cash in the form of reserves to the Authority and, therefore, the ability to defer having to take out new loans for the short to medium term.

	Actual 31.3.25 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.26 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.27 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.28 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.29 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.30 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.31 £000,s
Capital Financing Requirement	51,746	55,012	66,780	68,428	69,195	73,093	72,277
Less PFI	-17,699	-17,075	-16,402	-15,674	-14,886	-14,034	-13,182
Less MRD	-39	0	0	0	0	0	0
Borrowing CFR	34,008	37,937	50,378	52,754	54,309	59,059	59,095
Existing Debt Portfolio (PWLB)	33,720	33,720	33,720	33,720	36,720	39,720	42,720
Under / (Over) Borrowing	288	4,217	16,658	19,034	17,589	19,339	16,375

102. The Treasury Management Code now recommends including a “liability benchmark” as a measure of how the existing loan portfolio matches the Authority’s planned borrowing needs. The table overleaf outlines how the Authority utilises internal cash over the short term and under-borrowing over the medium term. As the Authority utilises its available committed reserves and grants paid in advance of expenditure, it will need to seek additional borrowing. The Director of Finance and Procurement is reviewing the situation with Liverpool City Council’s Treasury Management team to determine when it is best to seek new loans based on future interest rate forecasts. Using internal cash benefits the Authority as it saves on interest payments it would have to make.

Liability Benchmark	Actual 31.3.25 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.26 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.27 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.28 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.29 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.30 £000,s	Estimate 31.3.31 £000,s
Capital Financing Requirement (Excluding PFI & MRD)	34,008	37,937	50,378	52,754	54,309	59,059	59,095
PWLB Loans	33,720	33,720	33,720	33,720	36,720	39,720	42,720
<i>Forecast New Loans taken out (incl in above)</i>					3,000	3,000	3,000
(Under)/Over Borrowed	- 288	- 4,217	- 16,658	- 19,034	- 17,589	- 19,339	- 16,375

## (F) TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2026/2027

### INTRODUCTION

103. This report sets out the expected treasury operations for this period, linked to the Budget, Financial Plan and Capital Programme. It is inextricably linked to delivering the Authority's aims and objectives. It contains four key legislative requirements:

- (a) The Treasury Management Strategy Statement which sets out how the Authority's treasury service supports capital decisions, day to day treasury management and the limitations on activity through treasury prudential indicators. The key indicator is the Authorised Limit required by S3 of the Local Government Act 2003 and is in accordance with the CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy) Codes of Practice.
- (b) The reporting of the prudential indicators for external debt and the treasury management prudential indicators as required by the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.
- (c) The investment strategy which sets out the Authority's criteria for choosing investment counterparties and limiting exposure to the risk of loss. This strategy is in accordance with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Guidance on Local Government Investments. It is proposed to maintain the Authority's minimum long-term credit rating requirement of Fitch A- or equivalent.
- (d) The Authority's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy, this defines how the Authority will provide for the repayment of debt from revenue each year. This policy is governed by the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, which mandate a "prudent provision" for all debt-funded capital expenditure.

In accordance with the latest CIPFA Treasury Management and Prudential Codes (2021 Edition), a Capital Strategy has been produced and is included in Section C of this report.

### PROPOSED STRATEGY

104. The above policies and parameters provide an approved framework within which the Officers undertake the day-to-day capital and treasury activities. The Authority is recommended to approve each of the key elements contained within this report, which are:

- The Treasury Management Strategy 2026/2027.
- The External Debt and Treasury Management Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2026/2027 to 2028/2029.
- The Investment Strategy 2026/2027.

- The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement is included in section D, which sets out the Authority's policy on MRP.

## TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

105. The suggested strategy for 2026/2027 in respect of Treasury Management is based upon treasury officers' views on interest rates supplemented by leading market forecasts. The strategy covers:

- prospects for interest rates
- capital borrowing and debt rescheduling
- annual investment strategy
- external debt prudential indicators
- treasury management prudential indicators
- performance indicators
- treasury management advisers

Each of the above is now considered in more detail below:

### **(a) PROSPECTS FOR INTEREST RATES:**

The Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27 will be influenced by both national and geopolitical factors. Developed economies have been open for some years now post-pandemic, but the degree to which inflation took root in those economies demanded central banks tighten monetary policy dramatically compared to the ultra-low interest rates of the previous decade.

In the UK, the CPI measure of inflation is at 3.4% (December 2025), somewhat above the target of 2% the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee is trying to achieve over a two to three years' time horizon. Although recent inflation and employment data points towards a reduction in headline inflation through 2026, the Bank will need to exercise fine judgment as to the degree of inflation emanating from the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025 Budget. Moreover, geo-political events may play a meaningful part in impacting monetary policy over the coming months.

The Bank of England's (BoE) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) cut the bank rate by 25bps in December 2025, to 3.75%.

The outlook from markets commentators suggests that monetary policy is tight enough to permit some moderate easing but the extent of this will depend on future data. A forecast for the next reduction in the bank rate to be made in June 2026, followed by one further cut in December 2026.

Any movement further below the current 3.75% bank rate will depend heavily on inflation data in the first half of 2026. At the February 2026 meeting, the MPC voted 5-4 to hold rates, with four members pushing for a further reduction to 3.5%. This indicates the finely balanced nature of the decision and how the future path of policy will be heavily data-dependent.

In terms of the PWLB forecast, the short to medium part of the yield curve is expected to remain elevated over the next year. The extent to which rates

moderate will depend on the strength of the arguments for further bank rate loosening or otherwise.

The longer part of the yield curve will similarly be influenced by inflation factors, however, an additional concern is emerging, namely the extent to which major developed economies, such as the US and France are projected to run large budget deficits. This could result in a glut of government debt issuance and investors may only be willing to absorb this additional supply if the interest rates offered provide sufficient reward for the increased borrowing levels.

**(b) CAPITAL BORROWING AND DEBT RESCHEDULING:**

The borrowing requirement comprises the expected movements in the Capital Financing Requirement and reserves plus any maturing debt which will need to be re-financed. The Authority envisages that no new long-term borrowing will be required until 2028/29. The latest projection is that £3m will be required in 2028/29, with a further £3m required in both 2029/30 and 2030/31. In the short-term, and at a time when long-term rates are relatively high, the Authority will continue to mitigate interest costs by use of internal resources ahead of further borrowing. Where borrowing is required, the Authority may initially choose to benefit from lower short-term rates available from the intra-authority market and consider taking longer-term PWLB debt when there is no further value to be obtained from the intra-authority market. In light of this, Treasury Officers will monitor the interest rate market and adopt a pragmatic approach to any changing circumstances.

Rescheduling of debt is the early repayment of loans and replacement by loans for different periods and at different interest rates. It can be used to enhance the balance of the long-term portfolio, by for example, amending the maturity profile or changing volatility levels and may on occasion generate cash savings. Debt rescheduling becomes more beneficial when the relationship between short- and long-term rates moves appreciably.

Current PWLB lending terms have severely constrained the option to generate savings via debt rescheduling. Recent rises in long term interest rates may provide more favourable debt rescheduling opportunities. Interest rate structures will be continually monitored for opportunities to generate savings from debt rescheduling. Any rescheduling that takes place will be reported to Members in monitoring reports.

**(c) ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

The primary purpose of the Annual Investment Strategy is to set out the policies for managing investments giving priority to the security and liquidity of the Authority's investments. It also contains the policy on the use of credit ratings and credit ratings agencies, procedures for determining and limiting the use of higher risk investments and the use of external advisors.

The Authority's investment priorities are (a) the security of capital and (b) liquidity of its investments. The Authority will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity. All

investments will be in sterling. All cash balances will be invested in accordance with the Code of Practice and with full regard to the statutory guidance.

A counterparty list of institutions with which the Authority will invest shall be maintained by reference to the criteria set out below for the different categories of institution and their credit rating. Regardless of these criteria, the money market will be closely monitored, and any institution will be suspended from the counterparty lending list should any doubts arise concerning its financial standing. Under the guidance, investments fall into two separate categories, either specified or non-specified investments.

**Specified Investments:** - Specified investments offer high security and high liquidity and satisfy the conditions set out below:

- The investment is denominated in sterling and any payments or repayments in respect of the investment are payable in sterling only.
- The investment is not a long-term investment (has a maturity of less than one year).
- The investment does not involve the acquisition of share capital in any corporate body.
- The investment is made with a body or in an investment scheme which has been awarded a high credit rating by a credit rating agency, or with the UK Government or a local authority.

Specified investments will comprise the following institutions: -

- The UK Government (such as the Debt Management Account deposit facility, UK Treasury Bills or a Gilt with less than one year to maturity).
- Supranational bonds of less than one year's duration.
- UK Local Authorities.
- Money Market Funds.
- Ultra-Short Duration Bond Funds.
- UK Banks.
- Foreign banks registered in the UK.
- Building Societies.

**Credit Rating Criteria:** - The Authority will invest with UK institutions or non-UK institutions that are domiciled in a country which has a minimum Sovereign long-term rating of "AA". The institution must have a high credit rating assigned by any of the three credit ratings agencies (Fitch, Moodys and Standard & Poors). To be deemed highly rated the institution must satisfy at least the minimum of the following Fitch (or equivalent) criteria:

Long term credit rating A-

If any of the agencies assigns a rating lower than the Fitch minimum (or equivalent) to an institution, then the Authority will not invest with that institution.

In addition, the Authority will use institutions that are part nationalised UK banks.

Regardless of the credit rating assigned to an institution or whether it is covered by a guarantee, if any doubt over its financial standing exists then that institution is removed immediately from the counterparty lending list.

**Investment Limits:** - The credit ratings and individual limits for each institution within the categories of investments to be used by the Authority in 2026/27 are as follows:

UK Government (including gilts and the DMADF)	Unlimited
UK Local Authorities (each)	Unlimited
Part Nationalised UK banks	£4m
Money Market Funds (AAA rated)	£3m
Enhanced Money Market (Cash) Funds (AAA rated)	£3m
Ultra-Short Duration Bond Funds (AAA rated)	£3m
UK Banks and Building Societies (A- or higher rated)	£2m
Foreign banks registered in the UK (A or higher rated)	£2m

No limits on investments with the UK Government and Local Authorities have been set because they are considered to be of the highest credit quality and are essentially risk free. The limits placed on other categories reflect some uncertainty and marginally higher risk profile of the institutions within those categories. The status of Royal Bank of Scotland as a part nationalized bank is unlikely to change for many years but in the event the bank is re-privatised it will revert to the lower limit of £2m alongside other UK banks. Money Market Funds although AAA rated, invest in a diverse portfolio so are not completely risk free and have been assigned a lower limit. There is a slightly higher risk for A- rated banks as described in the paragraph on Security below and so these institutions have the lowest limit.

Ways to increase investment returns have been considered including (a) reducing the minimum credit rating criteria from A- to BBB; (b) increasing the limits with individual institutions and (c) investing for periods longer than one year. Any of these ways would involve taking on additional risk because higher investment returns can only be achieved by taking higher risks. The decision not to do this but to continue with current policies was taken in the light of the Banking Reform Act which enables the Government to force investors to take losses if a bank became insolvent. It is now unlikely that the Government would fully fund a taxpayer bail-out of a failed bank.

The maximum that may be invested with different banks that are part of the same conglomerate shall not exceed the maximum of the highest rated bank within the group. The limits may be exceeded for short periods when there are adverse conditions in the money market with the agreement of the Director of Finance and Procurement, Head of Finance or Treasury Manager.

**Non-Specified Investments:** - Non-specified investments do not, by definition, meet the requirements of a specified investment. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) guidance requires that greater

detail is provided of the intended use of non-specified investments due to greater potential risk. The following types of non-specified investments may be used.

- Deposits with the Authority's own banker shall be unlimited for transactional purposes and to allow for unusual cash flow circumstances.
- Deposits with a maturity of greater than one year (including forward deals in excess of one year from inception to repayment) with any bank or building society that meets the credit rating criteria above.
- Building societies which do not meet the normal credit criteria but are one of the top ten building societies, determined by asset size. Those societies that are within the top ten but do not have an agency determined credit rating shall have an individual limit of £1m. Building Society rankings are checked annually with the Building Societies Association.

**Risk Management of Investment Counterparties:** - Bank and Money Market Fund ratings are checked daily. The Authority is alerted by e-mail when there is an amendment by any of the agencies to the credit rating of an institution. If an amendment means an institution no longer meets the Authority's minimum requirement, or any doubt over its financial standing exists, then that institution is removed immediately from the counterparty lending list. Conversely, an institution may be added to the list should it achieve the minimum rating.

Credit ratings are only the starting point when considering credit risk. The Code of Practice requires the Authority to supplement credit rating information with additional operational market information which will be applied before making any specific investment decision from the agreed pool of counterparties. Credit Default Swaps and negative rating watches/outlooks are examined and the financial press, internet and financial information systems are monitored for market information regarding its counterparties. It also receives daily e-mails from various market participants that could identify potential problems. Any information that casts doubt on an institution's creditworthiness is acted on by suspending investment with that institution.

**Liquidity of Investments:** - Each investment decision is made with regard to cash flow requirements resulting in a range of maturity periods within the investment portfolio. Investments are normally short term having a maturity of less than one year. The Prudential Code does allow longer term investments and under certain money market conditions it may be prudent to invest for up to three years dependent on cash flow forecasts.

**Risk Benchmarking:-** The CIPFA Codes and the MHCLG Investment Guidance recommend the consideration and approval of security and liquidity benchmarks. Yield benchmarks are currently widely used to assess investment performance. Security and liquidity benchmarks were new requirements introduced in 2018/19, and the application of these is more subjective in nature. The benchmarks are simple guides to maximum risk and so may be breached from time to time depending on movements in interest rates and counterparty criteria. The purpose of them is for officers to monitor the current and trend position and amend the

operational strategy to manage risk as conditions change. Any breach of the benchmarks will be reported, with supporting reasons in the Mid-Year or Annual Report.

**Security:** - Security is currently evidenced by the application of minimum credit quality criteria to investment counterparties, primarily through the use of credit ratings. A method to benchmark security risk is to assess the historic level of default against the minimum criteria used in the Authority's investment strategy. The Authority's minimum credit rating criteria is "A-". The average expectation of default for a one-year investment in counterparty with an "A-" long term rating is 0.10% of the total investment. The inclusion of unrated Building Societies raises this factor to 0.14% e.g. for a £1m investment the average loss would be £1,400. This is only an average and any specific counterparty loss is likely to be higher, but these figures do act as a proxy benchmark for risk across the portfolio. The Authority's maximum security risk benchmark of 0.14% is embodied in the criteria for selecting cash investment counterparties and will be monitored and reported to Members.

**Liquidity:** - The Authority seeks to maintain liquid short-term deposits of at least £1 million available daily.

**Yield:** - The Authority's benchmark for investment returns is the Sterling Overnight Index Average (SONIA) rate.

### **ESG Policy**

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations are increasingly a factor in global investors' decision making, but the framework for evaluating investment opportunities is still developing and therefore the Authority's ESG policy does not currently include ESG scoring or other real-time ESG criteria at an individual investment level. When investing in banks and funds, the Authority will prioritise banks that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Banking and funds operated by managers that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment, the Net Zero Asset Managers Alliance and/or the UK Stewardship Code.

### **Business Models**

Under the IFRS 9 standard, the accounting for certain investments depends on the Authority's "business model" for managing them. The Authority aims to achieve value from its treasury investments by a business model of collecting the contractual cash flows and therefore, where other criteria are also met, these investments will continue to be accounted for at amortised cost.

**Reporting Arrangements:** - The Investments Strategy forms part of the Treasury Management Strategy which is referred to Policy and Resources or Audit Committee for monitoring. An interim report is produced during the year and a final annual report by 30th September following the end of a financial year.

### **(d) EXTERNAL DEBT PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS:**

The Prudential Code requires the following external debt indicators of prudence:

- Authorised limit for external debt
- Operational boundary for external debt

**Authorised Limit:** The Authorised Limit for Debt represents the maximum level of debt which the Authority may have during the year. The Authority has no powers to exceed this unless a further report with revised prudential indicators is approved by the Authority. The limit therefore makes appropriate allowance for the risks and uncertainties which affect day-to-day debt levels, and the ups and downs of short-term cash flow.

The authorised limits reflect the Authority's Capital Financing Requirement, identified in its capital expenditure and financing plans. They are consistent with the treasury management policy statement and practices. The limit will ensure that total gross debt does not exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding, current or following two financial years. The Authority is asked to approve the limits below and to delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Procurement, within the total limit for any individual year, to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long-term liabilities.

<b>Authorised Limit for External Debt</b>	<b>2026/27 £'000</b>	<b>2027/28 £'000</b>	<b>2028/29 £'000</b>
Gross Borrowing	51,000	53,000	55,000
Other Long-Term Liabilities	17,000	16,000	15,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,000</b>	<b>69,000</b>	<b>70,000</b>

**Operational Boundary:** The Operational Boundary indicator represents the expected maximum debt position during each year. It takes into account projections of borrowing requirement and repayments in future years. It may be different from the year end position as it reflects cash flows within each year. The Authority is asked to approve the limits and to delegate authority to the Director of Finance & Procurement, within the total limit for any individual year, to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long-term liabilities.

<b>Operational Boundary for External Debt</b>	<b>2026/27 £'000</b>	<b>2027/28 £'000</b>	<b>2028/29 £'000</b>
External Borrowing	46,000	48,000	50,000
Other Long-Term Liabilities	17,000	16,000	15,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63,000</b>	<b>64,000</b>	<b>65,000</b>

**Actual External Debt:** The prudential indicator for actual external debt considers a single point in time and hence is only directly comparable to the authorised limit and operational boundary at that point in time. Actual external debt is monitored during the year against the limits. It is forecast to be £33.7 million at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

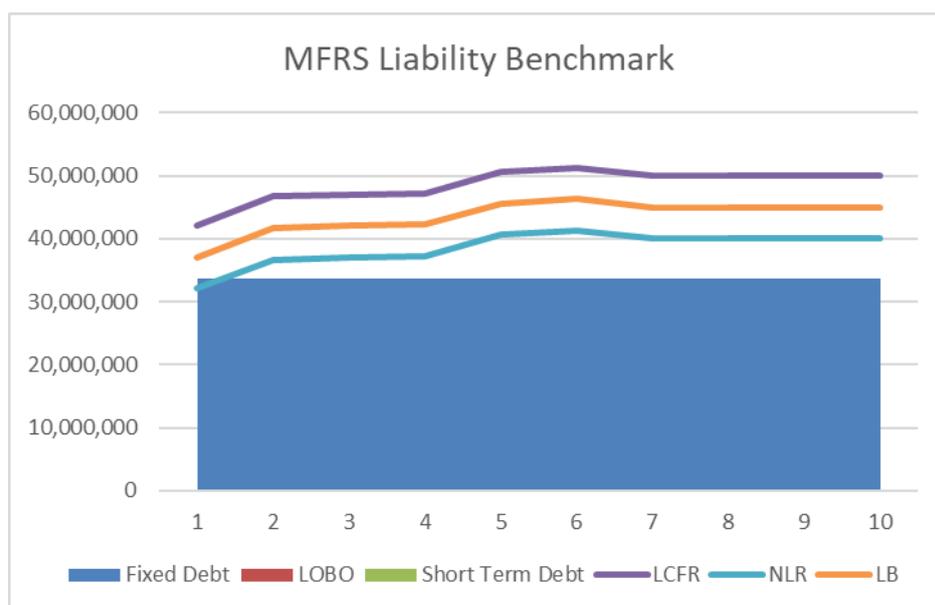
The figure for actual borrowing in recent years has been below the capital financing requirement. In an environment of extremely low interest returns, treasury officers have adopted a strategy whereby the Authorities' capital

borrowing need has not been fully funded by external debt, but rather cash supporting the Authorities usable reserves and working capital has been used as a temporary funding measure in lieu of external borrowing. Internal borrowing by its very nature is a temporary measure to contain interest costs in the short term, however the approach does involve an element of interest rate risk given that it postpones the point at which long-term borrowing costs are fixed. The following table demonstrates the estimated use of internal borrowing over the budget period, though actual borrowing decisions will be significantly influenced by expectations regarding movements in interest rates.

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Capital Financing Requirement	55.2	66.7	68.4	69.2	73.1	72.9
Less: PFI	(17.1)	(16.4)	(15.6)	(14.9)	(14.0)	(13.1)
<b>Borrowing CFR</b>	<b>38.1</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>52.8</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>59.1</b>	<b>59.8</b>
Existing Debt Portfolio	33.7	33.7	33.7	36.7	39.7	42.7
<b>Over(-)/Under borrowing</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>17.1</b>
<b>Borrowing as a % of CFR</b>	<b>88.4%</b>	<b>67.0%</b>	<b>63.8%</b>	<b>67.6%</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	<b>71.4%</b>

The Treasury Management Code now includes a requirement for authorities to produce a liability benchmark. This is a risk management tool which compares the authority's actual borrowing against its theoretical net borrowing requirement (which will include an allowance for liquidity). When actual borrowing is below the liability benchmark, then this indicates a future borrowing requirement and thus identifying where an authority is exposed to interest rate, liquidity and refinancing risks. Conversely, where actual borrowing exceeds the liability benchmark then this will highlight an overborrowed position which will result in excess cash in the organisation requiring investment and thus exposing the authority to credit and reinvestment risks and a potential cost of carry. The optimum borrowing position would be to hold a position that sits near to or on the liability benchmark thus maximising the use of internal borrowing and minimising risk.

The authority's liability benchmark is set out in the graph below. The benchmark assumes that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £5m at each year-end. The benchmark is currently £37.0m for 2025/2026 and is forecast to increase to £54.0m by 2029/2030 based on the combination of the borrowing requirement arising from the capital programme and the anticipated reduction of internal resources that will be available to off-set the need to borrow. The graph overleaf covers an extended period of ten years.



The shaded areas of the graph represent the maturity profile of the Authority's actual borrowing portfolio and the lines represent the notional borrowing requirement (purple line), the net loans requirement which offsets available balance sheet resources against the borrowing requirement (blue line) and finally the liability benchmark (orange line), which factors in a liquidity allowance.

The graph in prior years previously highlighted the extent to which the Authority borrowing levels has exceeded the liability benchmark based on the historic borrowing portfolio that is predominately long dated. However, this position reversed in 2024/2025 with the utilisation of internal borrowing to fund recent capital expenditure. The significant movement in interest rates during 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 has increased the cost of new borrowing and the consideration at this point is whether further risk is reduced by borrowing with longer term borrowing for durations that would reduce the gap between the existing debt portfolio and the estimated liability benchmark or borrowing for shorter periods. To inform these decisions treasury officers are mindful of the interest rate forecasts from appointed specialist treasury advisors. The latest forecast is that interest rates will continue to fall back during 2026/2027, as central banks are expected to implement an easing of monetary policy in response to falling inflation rates. As such the current strategy is to continue to defer the point at which long term debt is arranged.

**(e) TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS:**

The Treasury Management Code requires the following Treasury Management indicators of prudence:

- Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposures
- Upper limit on variable interest rate exposures
- Upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of borrowing
- Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 365 days

**Interest Rate Exposures:** It is recommended that the Authority sets upper limits on its fixed and variable interest rate exposures as a percentage of its net outstanding principal sums as follows: -

Upper Limits on Interest Rate Exposures	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	%	%	%
Fixed	100	100	100
Variable	50	50	50

This means that the Director of Finance and Procurement will manage fixed interest rate exposures within the range of 50% to 100% and variable interest rate exposures within the range of 0% to 50% for 2026/27.

**Maturity Structure of Borrowing:** It is recommended that the Authority sets upper and lower percentage limits for the maturity structure of its borrowings as follows. Percentage of projected fixed rate borrowing that is maturing in each period:

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
Under 12 months	50%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	50%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	50%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	50%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

**Total Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than 365 Days:** It is recommended that the limit for investments of longer than 365 days be set at £2 million for each of the years 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29.

#### (f) PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Code of Practice on Treasury Management requires the Authority to set performance indicators to assess the adequacy of the treasury function over the year. These are distinct historic indicators, as opposed to the prudential indicators, which are predominantly forward looking.

The Authority will maintain performance indicators for borrowing and investment, although it must be stressed that the pursuit of higher performance shall not be at the expense of taking undue risks. The indicators for the treasury function are:

- Borrowing – Average rate of borrowing for the year compared to average available.
- Investments – Internal returns compared to the Sterling Overnight Index Average (SONIA) rate.

The results of these indicators will be reported in the Treasury Management Monitoring and Annual Reports.

**Training** - CIPFA's Code of Practice requires the Director of Finance and Procurement to ensure that all members with responsibility for treasury management receive appropriate training relevant to their needs and understand their roles and responsibilities.

**(g) TREASURY MANAGEMENT ADVISORS**

The Treasury Management service is provided to the Authority by Liverpool City Council. The terms of the service are set out in an agreed Service Level Agreement. The Council employs treasury management advisers appointed under a competitive procurement exercise who provide a range of services which include:

- Technical support on treasury matters and capital finance issues.
- Economic and interest rate analysis.
- Debt services which includes advice on the timing of borrowing.
- Debt rescheduling advice surrounding the existing portfolio.
- Generic investment advice on interest rates, timing and investment instruments.
- Credit ratings/market information service comprising the three main credit rating agencies.

Whilst Liverpool City Council and its advisors provide the treasury function, the responsibility for any decision on treasury matters remains with the Authority.

## (G) REVENUE FORECASTS 2026/2027 – 2030/2031

106. The Authority has maintained a robust Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) over a number of years. The plan is thoroughly reviewed on an annual basis, monitored throughout the year, and reported on a quarterly basis through the financial review reports to Members.
107. This section of the report will develop a financial forecast for the Authority based upon the latest information. It will: -
- Outline the historical background to the current financial plan,
  - Outline the underlying assumptions to support the forecast,
  - Outline any movement since the previously approved financial plan.
108. Following the financial crisis of 2008, the Government implemented a programme of austerity that resulted in significant reductions in Government grant funding for the Authority since 2010/2011. The cumulative percentage reduction in Government revenue support for the Authority up to 2020 equated to a 33% cash reduction or approximately 50% in real terms.
109. The Authority has successfully managed evolving risks and demand through decisive action. Maintaining this resilience has, however, necessitated significant structural changes, including the reduction of our frontline workforce from over 1,000 to 620 firefighters and a decrease in our fleet from 43 to 26 fire engines in 2019.
110. In recent years, we have taken decisive steps to strengthen our capacity and resilience. This includes increasing our workforce to 642 firefighters and expanding our fire engine fleet to 34, improving our ability to respond to foreseeable and specialist risks.
111. The current budget provides for:
- a. 642 FTE firefighters
  - b. 35 FTE staff in fire control
  - c. 297 FTE support and technical staff,
  - d. Appliances:
    - i. Days: 27 immediately available plus 7 on a 30-minute recall
    - ii. Night: 21 immediately available plus 13 on a 30-minute recall
  - e. 21 fire stations maintained by various demand-led duty cover systems.
112. Based on the information at that time, the 2025/2026 MTFP approved at the Budget Authority meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025 delivered a balanced financial position in 2025/2026 and a £0.650m challenge in 2026/2027, rising to £1,442m by 2029/2030. As significant uncertainty existed over future Government funding and future cost increases from 2026/2027, Members were asked to note any financial challenges in future years and deal with any challenge once the future funding became clearer.

113. The current MTFP has been updated for the 2026/2027 first multi-year settlement for English councils in over a decade, the Merseyside local authorities' 2026/2027 Council Tax Base and Collection Fund surplus and deficits. All known pay and price inflation increases have been built into the MTFP, and a review of the key assumptions around future funding and cost pressures has been reviewed.
114. At the January 2026 budget strategy day, members considered the key budget assumptions that should be included in the updated MTFP. The following paragraphs summarise the proposed key assumptions to be included within the plan: -
115. **Inflation - Pay & Prices Changes: -**

**PAY:**

The previous MTFP assumed a 2.5% annual pay award for 2025/2026 and beyond. However, the proposed 2026/2027 MTFP has been updated to reflect the actual 2025/2026 national settlements, both of which exceeded budgeted provisions. The Grey Book (firefighter) pay award was agreed at 3.2% (effective 1 July 2025), creating a budget pressure of 0.7% (£330k). Similarly, the Green Book (non-operational) award was settled at 3.2% (effective 1 April 2025), representing a 0.7% (£100k) pressure.

Following the Strategy Day in January 2026, the 2026/2027 pay award assumption has been increased from 2.5% to 3.0% for all staff groups. This revised forecast accounts for current inflationary trends and recent public sector pay precedents, with a projected impact of £254k (part-year) and £314k (full-year). Assumptions for 2027/2028 onwards remain at 2.5% p.a. at this stage

**PENSIONS:**

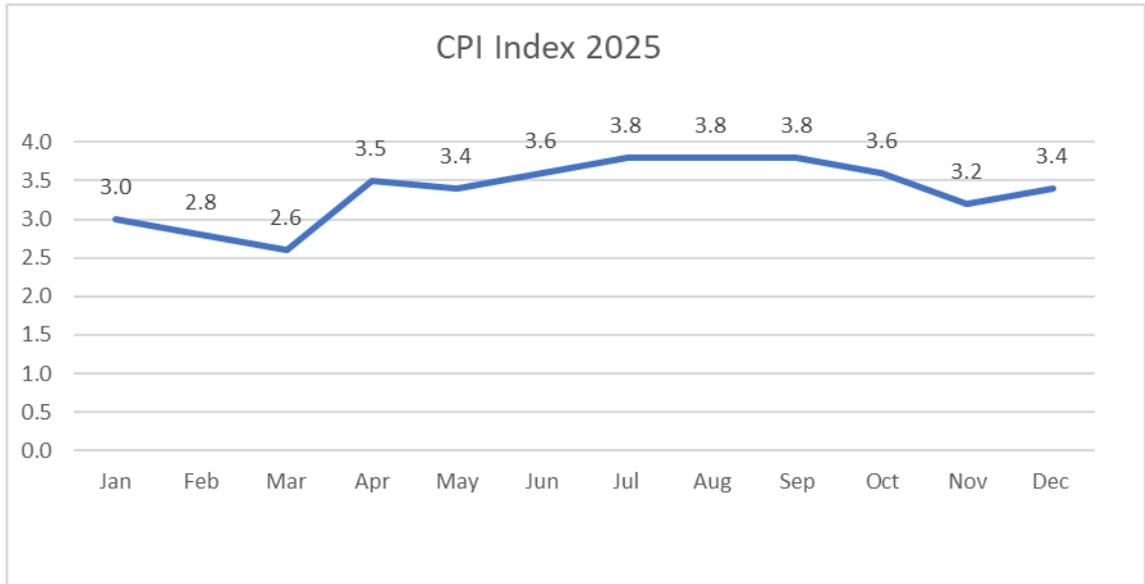
**Firefighter Pension Scheme: Firefighter Pension Scheme Actuarial review 2020:-** Following the 2020 actuarial review, the Home Office introduced a Fire Pension Grant for 2024/2025 to offset the rise in employer contribution rates from 28.8% to 37.6%. For the MFRA, the increase in employer contributions resulted in a total cost increase of over £2.300m. To bridge this gap, a fixed grant of £2.183m (calculated on a four-year average) was awarded for 2024/25. While initially issued on a one-year basis pending future Spending Reviews, the Authority's 2025/2026 MTFP assumed this £2.183m contribution will continue in future years. Confirmation for 2026/2027 is currently awaited, though funding is expected to remain at the £2.183m.

**Future LGPS Employer Contribution Update:** Merseyside Pension Fund aims to maintain long-term solvency and cost efficiency while maximising investment returns within acceptable risk levels. Following the January 2026 consultation on the 2025 actuarial results, the fund is estimated to be 117% funded. Based on this surplus, the Actuary recommends establishing a 1% Sustainability Reserve and reducing MFRA employer contributions from 17.9% to 5.9% for the three-year period. The new employer contribution rates will typically come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 and will be formally certified in the Actuary's formal report on the 2025 actuarial valuation, this report will be signed

off by the actuary by 31 March 2026. This change will deliver approximately £1.150m in annual savings, which have been integrated into the MTFP through 2028/29, followed by a planned 50% tapering of these savings in 2029/30 and 2030/31.

## PRICES

The current MTFP included a provision for general price and energy increases of 2% based on inflation forecasts in January 2025. The government expected CPI inflation to fall towards the target of 2% in 2025/26. The Twelve-month CPI inflation can be seen in the following chart.



The Office of Budget Responsibility forecasts CPI inflation of 2.5% in 2026. Over the medium term, once pressures ease, inflation is expected to stabilise around the 2% target.

The proposed MTFP has built an increase of £0.622m to uplift the contingency for pay and inflation towards the impact of the inflationary pressures in 2025/2026 and the expected 2026/2027 inflationary impact.

An inflation provision of £1.796m is included in the proposed MTFP to cover the new-year, 2030/2031, based on general inflation of 2% and pay uplifts of 2.5%.

### 116. Revenue Growth

The current plan assumed no future unavoidable growth requirements beyond those approved in the 2025/2026 plan. However, the CFO, SLT, and Officers have identified several unavoidable growth pressures not covered by inflation, totalling £0.476m (net of savings) in 2026/2027. This has been built into the proposed MTFP and includes:

- Increased ICT Service Provider Costs: Improving digital systems and IT facilities across the Authority.
- Fleet and Rescue Equipment: Rising maintenance and parts costs.

- Support Services and HR: adding HR and Occupational Health resources, and launching Procurement and Communications apprenticeships to build future talent.
- Income Fluctuations: A reduction in Marine Fire One income.
- Operational Pressures: Increases in scientific support costs, Health & Safety software applications, Cyber Security Arrangements, and PPE/laundry costs.

These pressures are partially offset by:

- Utility Savings: Reductions resulting from the solar panel rollout and decarbonisation project.
- Financial Gains: An increase in investment income and a reduction in Merseyside Residual Debt.

Furthermore, the current MTFP budget provides the necessary provisions to review the Establishment. This ensures alignment with job evaluation standards and helps mitigate challenges regarding recruitment, retention, and organisational expansion (£0.400m in 2026/2027 and £0.300m in future years).

#### **117. Cost of Capital Borrowing**

The proposed MTFP incorporates the 5-year Capital Programme and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy, as detailed in Sections C and D. Where revenue headroom has permitted, the Authority has made voluntary contributions to the capital programme to minimise the underlying need to borrow. However, to fund the proposed MTFP Capital Programme, an additional revenue provision of £0.090m will be required in 2030/31 to service the associated borrowing costs.

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 for building up the Capital Reserve. The proposed MTFP will increase the Capital Investment Reserve by £0.493m to £2.529m to fund a significant proportion of this investment to maintain borrowing at an affordable and sustainable level and to contribute towards the CRMP.

#### **118. Non-Pay Budget - 2% Efficiency Target**

As part of the spending review, fire and rescue services will be expected to increase wholetime firefighter productivity by 3% and create 2% of non-pay budget efficiency savings. For MFRA, 2% efficiency saving of non-pay budget would equate to approx. £0.300m in 2026/2027.

The Director of Finance & Procurement is confident a £0.300m efficiency saving can be offered up from non-pay budgets and the £0.300m efficiency saving has been built into the proposed MTFP.

119. **Resources Available:** The Authority has two primary sources **Government Funding** and **Council Tax**.

120. **Government Funding;**

In November 2025 the Government published its Local Government Finance Policy Statement for 2026/2027 to 2028/2029, marking the first multi-year financial settlement for English councils in over a decade. The settlement provides fixed funding envelopes for the next three financial years, allowing the Authority to transition from year-to-year planning to long-term financial planning.

The settlement also introduced funding protection for standalone Fire and Rescue Authorities, a new "**real-terms funding floor**" has been introduced. This floor ensures their 2025/2026 income is protected in real terms throughout the multi-year period, **provided standalone Fire and Rescue Authorities take up the £5.00 per annum precept flexibility**.

The funding floor protection is 3.8% for 2026/27 (based on post-council tax Core Spending Power), with the GDP deflator to be used for the following years. As a result, our funding for 2026/27 will increase by £408k compared to the Provisional Settlement figures.

**2026/2027 Government Fair Funding Assessment** - The Governments Fair Funding Assessment for the 2026/2027 financial year identifies the following adjustments for the Authority:

- **Baseline Funding Level:** A reduction of £2.167 million, representing a 9.8% decrease on the 2025/2026 amount.
- **Revenue Support Grant:** An uplift of £7.882 million, equivalent to a 46.6% increase on the 2025/2026 amount.
- **Business Rates Multiplier (Compensation for Under-Indexing):** A total reduction of £5.095 million (100% decrease), on the 2025/26 amount.
- **National Insurance Grant:** A total reduction of £0.425 million (100% decrease), on the 2025/26 amount.
- **Transitional Protection:** New Fire & Rescue real terms floor increase of £0.408 million (100%), on the 2025/26 amount.
- **Net Position:** A marginal net increase in the Fair Funding Assessment of £0.603 million (0.135%), on the 2025/26 amount.

**Provisional Fair Funding Assessment (2027/28 onwards)** – The provisional outlook for subsequent years is as follows:

- **Baseline Funding Level:** Projected increases of £0.457 million in 2027/2028 and £0.411 million in 2028/2029.

- **Revenue Support Grant:** Forecast reductions of £0.928 million in 2027/2028 and £1.068 million in 2028/2029.
- **Transitional Protection:** The Authority will not receive any transitional protection within 2027/2028 and 2028/2029 (reduction of £0.408 million)
- **Net Fiscal Impact:** An anticipated net decrease in the Fair Funding Assessment of £0.879 million in 2027/28 and £0.657 million in 2028/29. Total net decrease from 2026/27 of £1.536 million.
- **Medium-Term Assumptions:** The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) assumes a 1% annual growth rate for both Baseline Funding and the Revenue Support Grant from 2029/30 onwards.

121. **Council Tax Income;**

The current plan assumed a Council Tax Base increase of 0.5% for 2026/2027 and future years; the actual increase in 2026/2027 was an increase of 2.05%. The 2026/2027 Tax Base figures are in the table below: -

District	2025/26	2026/27	Variance	
	Council Tax Taxbase	Council Tax Taxbase		
KNOWSLEY	39,638.00	<b>40,313.00</b>	675.00	1.70%
LIVERPOOL	120,257.54	<b>122,885.21</b>	2,627.67	2.19%
SEFTON	87,367.70	<b>89,044.00</b>	1,676.30	1.92%
ST.HELENS	53,700.00	<b>54,022.00</b>	322.00	0.60%
WIRRAL	97,908.96	<b>100,786.00</b>	2,877.04	2.94%
	<b>398,872.20</b>	<b>407,050.21</b>	<b>8,178.01</b>	<b>2.05%</b>
2025/26 Band D Tax Level	96.25	96.25		
Total Income £	<b>38,391,449</b>	<b>39,178,583</b>	<b>787,133</b>	<b>2.05%</b>

122. This means that for each £1 of Council Tax, the income level will be higher than that generated in 2024/2025 by £8,178. **The result is that the income from the current level of Council Tax is anticipated to be higher by £0.787m.**

123. The updated MTFP assumes the Authority will increase the precept by £5.00 per Band D property in 2026/2027, a level that avoids the requirement for a referendum. This £5.00 increase is also assumed for 2027/2028 and 2028/2029, followed by an assumed 2% annual increase for the final two years of the plan. A £5.00 increase for 2026/2027 will see the Band D precept increase from £96.25 to £101.25. **The precept increase will raise an additional £2.035m in 2026/2027.**

Council Tax Increase			
District	Change In Band D Tax		
	0%	£5.00	Change
	£96.25	£101.25	£5.00
	£	£	£
KNOWSLEY	3,880,126	4,081,691	201,565
LIVERPOOL	11,827,701	12,442,128	614,427
SEFTON	8,570,485	9,015,705	445,220
ST.HELENS	5,199,618	5,469,727	270,109
WIRRAL	9,700,653	10,204,582	503,929
	<b>39,178,583</b>	<b>41,213,833</b>	<b>2,035,251</b>

### Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund

124. Each billing authority maintains a **collection fund** account to which any surplus or deficit in the actual collected council tax or local business rate income to that assumed in the budget is charged. The Merseyside authorities have reviewed their collection funds and identified the proportion of any surplus or deficit attributable to the Authority. The tables below summarise the collection fund position for Council Tax and Business Rates: -

Council Tax Collection Fund	
District	deficit/ (surplus)
	2025/26
	£
KNOWSLEY	<b>-31,000</b>
LIVERPOOL	<b>152,401</b>
SEFTON	<b>-238,842</b>
ST.HELENS	<b>2,084</b>
WIRRAL	<b>6,000</b>
Net MFRA Impact	<b>-109,357</b>

125. The council tax collection fund has a surplus of £0.109m and this will be taken into account in the 2026/2027 MTFP.

<b>Business Rates Collection Fund</b>	
District	deficit/ (surplus)
	2025/26
	£
KNOWSLEY	-6,838
LIVERPOOL	26,264
SEFTON	-1,914
ST.HELENS	-3,871
WIRRAL	-41,498
Net MFRA Impact	-27,857

126. The business rates collection fund has a surplus of £0.027m.

### **Discretionary service Charges**

127. Members approved an overarching charging policy for special and discretionary services at the Policy and Resources Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021. The income raised is included within the budget, approximately £0.054m for special services charges. The report approved by members included a recommendation that the charges will be uplifted annually as outlined below, and details about the charges will be included with each annual budget report for consideration.

The proposed increase in charges is based on the following;

- a. Fees and charges have increased by 3.2%, in line with the 2025/2026 firefighter pay award.
- b. Automatic Fire Alarms have gone up with the CPI rate for December 2025, which was 3.4%.

Appendix E, attached to this report, outlines the proposed 2026/2027 charges.

### **OVERALL IMPACT**

128. The overall impact of all these changes to the 2026/2027 MTFP is outlined below:

Proposed 2026/27 - 2030/31 MTFP					
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Current 2025/26 MTFP Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>1,139</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>1,442</b>
<b>2025/26 MTFP Issues to build in future MTFP:-</b>					
Impact of the 2025/26 Grey Book Pay Award (Increase of 0.70%)	330	330	330	330	330
Impact of the 2025/26 Green Book Pay Award (Increase of 0.70%)	100	100	100	100	100
Historic Employers National Insurance Grant now consolidated within the Fair Funding Assessment	425	425	425	425	425
Impact 2026/27 Pay Award moving from 2.5% p.a. to 3% p.a.	254	314	314	314	314
Impact 2025 LGPS Actuarial Valuation reduction in employers pension contribution 17.9% - 5.9% 2026/27 to 2028/29 then assume only 50% of the saving for 2029/30 & 2030/31	-1,150	-1,150	-1,150	-575	-575
2030/31 Inflation Provision	0	0	0	0	1,796
Impact of Higher Prices (Inflation/Contingency)	622	784	953	957	957
2030/31 MRP/Interest - Additional year and Inflationary Impact on cost of Capital Goods	0	0	0	0	90
Contribution to Capital Reserve to fund Capital Programme and additional Inflationary Pressures	493	0	0	0	0
Unavoidable Growth net of Savings	476	425	282	600	480
Provision for the review of Establishment to meet Job Evaluation / Recruitment / Retention / Growth Challenges	400	300	300	300	300
Historic Business Rates Grant compensation for under-indexation of tax rates now consolidated within the Fair Funding Assessment	5,095	5,095	5,095	5,095	5,095
Transitional Protection for 2026/27 - Fire and Rescue real terms floor 3.8%	-408				
Increase in Fair Funding Assessment in 2026/27 - 2028/29 above the assumed MTFP	-5,325	-4,460	-3,406	-3,439	-3,879
Council Tax Precept	-1,858	-3,122	-4,382	-4,493	-5,669
Collection Fund Change	-137				
SFA Local Business Rate Estimate Adjustment	34				
Summary of impact of changes to 2026/27 MTFP	<b>-650</b>	<b>-959</b>	<b>-1,139</b>	<b>-386</b>	<b>-237</b>
<b>Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,056</b>	<b>1,205</b>

129. The proposed MTFP, as a result of the changes identified in this section of the report, forecasts a balanced position in 2026/2027, 2027/28 and 2028/29 but indicates a potential financial challenge in 2029/30 of £1,056m, rising to £1.205m by 2030/2031.

130. As the updated MTFP results in a balanced financial position for 2026/2027, Members do not need to consider options for additional savings in 2026/2027. This is subject to the key assumptions, particularly around the 2026/2027 annual pay increases (3% for all staff), remaining robust.

131. The MTFP delivers a balanced financial position in 2026/2027 – 2028/29 but outlines a potential financial challenge from 2029/2030. Members are asked to note this at this point due to the significant uncertainty over future Government funding, council tax base and precept increases, pay awards and inflation; the Authority has access to a range of mitigating strategies that could be deployed to close the funding gap without the need for service reductions.

a. **Reserves** – The Authority maintains a level of reserves set aside to manage unmitigated financial risks. Please see the table below for balances:

Reserve	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	£m	£m	£m	£m	
General Reserve	3.900	3.900	3.900	3.900	3.900
Smoothing Reserve	1.400	1.400	1.400	1.400	1.400
Inflation Reserve	1.890	1.890	1.890	1.890	1.890
Total Reserves Available to Manage General Financial Risk	7.190	7.190	7.190	7.190	7.190

Available balances are sufficient to cover the projected MTFP deficit should the Authority not succeed in closing the gap by other means, in future years.

- b. **Capital Programme** – Re-phase/delay the capital programme and look at ways to reduce the revenue cost of borrowing. Extending the life of property, vehicles, and equipment, would allow for the annual revenue contribution to capital to be reduced by £0.250m.
- c. **Non-pay budget Inflation** – The Authority could cash limit the Authority's non pay budget (excluding unavoidable increases), saving £0.255m from the inflation provision.
- d. **Non-pay budget** – The Authority could assess the Authority's non pay budgets and look at reducing these between 5 – 10%. This could generate a saving of between of £0.750m and £1.500m.

132. The updated MTFP is attached to this report as Appendix C.

## (H) ADEQUACY OF RESERVES AND BALANCES

133. Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer has a statutory duty to report to the Authority on the following matters when it is determining its budget and council tax:
- The robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations.
  - The adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.
134. The Authority is required to have regard to the Chief Finance Officer's report when making decisions regarding its budget requirement and the level of financial reserves.
135. The Authority's Chief Finance Officer is the Director of Finance and Procurement (the Section 151 Officer). For the purposes of the Act, "financial reserves" include both Earmarked (Committed) Reserves and General Fund (Working) Balances.
136. To reach a final judgement on these matters, the Chief Finance Officer must consider the Authority's proposed budget decisions within the context of this comprehensive report.

### **Robustness of Estimate**

137. To satisfy the requirements of the Chief Finance Officer, any proposed Budget or amendment should:
- Be based on the professional advice of Service Officers, supported by Finance Officers, or other information deemed reasonable by the Chief Finance Officer.
  - Ensure all proposals are fully costed to the service level, with identified financial and performance implications.
  - Account for all known future developments through direct budget allocations or specific earmarked reserves.
  - Maintain an adequate level of balances and reserves consistent with the Authority's risk assessment and statutory regulations.
  - Provide for the full revenue implications arising from the Capital Programme.
  - Establish clear and achievable targets for key income streams.
  - Ensure there are no "unidentified" or "unmet" savings targets.
  - Account for the consequences of any current-year overspends or underspends.

### **Adequacy of proposed Financial Reserves**

138. Under the Local Government Act 2003, the Secretary of State holds the power to enact regulations defining "controlled reserves" and setting minimum aggregate

levels for such reserves. At the time of this report, no such regulations have been enacted.

139. Notwithstanding the absence of national regulations, Section 25 of the 2003 Act mandates that the Chief Finance Officer must report to the Authority if the proposed level of reserves is considered inadequate. In such an event, the report must outline:
- The underlying reasons for the projected inadequacy.
  - Recommended actions to mitigate the risk and prevent the situation from arising.
140. The Authority is statutorily required to have regard to this report and its findings when determining its future financial reserves and budget requirements.

#### **Fire and Rescue National Framework for England**

141. The Framework requires that each fire and rescue authority publish their reserves strategy on their website, either as part of their medium-term financial plan or in a separate reserves strategy document. This section of the proposed MTFP fulfils that requirement, as it includes details of current and future planned reserve levels and sets out a total amount of reserves and the amount of each specific reserve held for each year over the next 5 years.

#### **General Revenue Reserve £3.9m (5% of the current Revenue Budget)**

142. The level of the General Fund Balance is a matter for the Authority to determine with regard to the advice of the Chief Finance Officer. A general assumption over many years was to allow for a balance of 5% of Net Operating Expenditure unless the organisation had a financial risk management process operating, which justified a lower level of reserves. In addition, the Fire and Rescue National Framework requires a statement within the reserves strategy outlining the justification for a general reserve larger than 5%.
143. For this Authority, a 5% forecast Net Operating Expenditure equates to approximately £3.9m. Given the level of specific reserves held by the Authority to cover those issues deemed to be high risk, such as annual pay inflation, the current General Revenue Reserve is deemed prudent. The Director of Finance and Procurement (Chief Finance Officer) recommends **maintaining the general reserve at its current £3.9m level.**

#### **Committed (Earmarked) Reserves**

144. The Authority has created these reserves for specific purposes and involves funds being set aside to meet known or predicted future liabilities or risks. The Director of Finance and Procurement has carried out a review of current reserves based on the latest financial review, known financial risks, and the planned future use of the Authority's forecast reserves. The proposed reserves for 2026/2027 and future years are outlined below, and the planned use over the MTFP is in the table at the end of this section and attached as Appendix D.
145. **Emergency & Insurance Related Reserves;**

- e. **Bellwin & Emergency Planning, £0.2m** - The Bellwin scheme is intended to reimburse the eligible cost of local authority actions taken in the immediate phase of an emergency. The Government expects councils to cover costs themselves up to a certain level - an individual authority is required to have spent 0.2% of its calculated annual budget on works that have been reported. This reserve is held as a contingency to provide the Authority with the funds to meet those costs not deemed to be eligible for grant support and any other emergency planning costs.
- f. **Insurance Reserve, £0.5m** - The Authority has a number of insurance premiums that require it to cover an excess (for example £250k on employee & public liability, £10k on vehicles). Based on recent claims history, this reserve has been established as a contingency to cover those costs that can't be contained within the base revenue budget.

146. **Modernisation Challenge Reserves;**

- g. **Smoothing Reserve, £1.4m** – This reserve was created to allow the Authority time to re-engineer the Service and deliver future saving options if the future Government funding assumptions in the proposed MTFP do not reflect the actual future change. This level of uncertainty means the Authority may face significant future funding cuts but with little time to manage any required budget reductions. By having this reserve, the Authority may be able to avoid compulsory redundancies by allowing it time to identify permanent savings to cover any additional costs or reduced funding.
- h. **Pensions Reserve, £0.3m** – The Firefighters' Pensions (Remediable Service) Regulations 2023 took effect on 1 October 2023. This new legislation allows for retrospective remedy covering the period between 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022. The Authority has successfully completed the remedy data exercise, but it is important to note that the exercise is still taking place and may take additional time and resources for the pension administrators to complete. This reserve will be maintained to contribute towards additional administration and possible compensation payments. However, it is hoped the government will continue to fund all such costs as the changes to public pension schemes come about due to changes in government legislation.
- i. **Recruitment Reserve, £1.1m** – As firefighters retire over the next few years, the Authority plans to recruit in advance of these employees leaving over this period. This means the firefighter establishment could be, on average, +20 FTE above the budgeted establishment at a potential +£0.6m p.a. This reserve will cover any costs that can't be contained within the establishment budget.
- j. **Collection Fund Reserve, £0.1m** – Section G of this report outlines the council tax and business rates collection fund positions for 2026/2027. Given the fluctuation over the last year or so, it is felt prudent to keep a small reserve.
- k. **Carbon Net Zero Reserve, £2.0m** – The Authority is dedicating £2.0 million reserve to a solar panel rollout and decarbonisation project. This strategic

"invest-to-save" initiative provides a hedge against energy market volatility, delivering an initial £150,000 in annual savings, rising to a sustained £250,000 reduction in revenue expenditure from 2028/2029.

**147. Capital Reserve, £2.5m**

The reserve is committed to contributing towards capital investments and reducing the required level of borrowing. The general capital reserve has been increased by £0.493m to £2.529m to contribute towards the Capital Programme and reduce borrowing costs in the future, given the impact of inflation on major capital schemes.

**148. PFI Annuity Reserve, £1.2m**

PFI schemes have an affordability gap (existing budget plus grant never covers the proposed total cost of the scheme). As the grant was paid in advance of the full PFI scheme being completed, PFI authorities, therefore, received an "excess" grant relative to the unitary charge payments at the beginning of the scheme. This available grant was put into a reserve and is then drawn down to smooth out the affordability gap over the life of the PFI. This reserve provides the Authority with that resource and will be fully utilised over the PFI life.

**149. Specific Reserves;**

**a Inflation Reserve, £1.9m** - This reserve provides some resilience if the pay and price inflation assumptions in the MTFP are insufficient and the actual inflation increase is higher than expected. Each additional 1% above the pay inflation assumption would require a permanent budget increase of +£0.630m p.a. This reserve would hopefully allow the Authority time to identify and implement any new savings to fund the pay award if it exceeded the level assumed in the plan.

**b Clothing Reserve, £0.9m** – This reserve is to support investment in a full upgrade of our Technical Rescue Ensembles, encompassing specialised helmets, tunics, trousers, and footwear.

**c Equipment Reserve, £0.4m** – This reserve has been established to fund those planned projects or investments in equipment that had been budgeted for but not completed in the anticipated year. Therefore, the budget has been carried forward. The equipment refresh is expected to be finalised over the next 12 – 18 months.

**d Training Reserve, £0.3m** – The reserve has been established to fund additional training requirements as a result of firefighter retirements and turnover of staff.

**e Other, £0.1m** – this reserve is to fund community-based initiatives and health and safety.

**150. Ringfenced Reserves, £0.4m** - External grants / contributions have been received to fund specific projects such as; Local Authorities funds for community initiatives; energy efficiency schemes; and new dimensions related activities. This reserve ensures the funds are brought forward until they have been fully spent.

151. The anticipated, planned use of these reserves over the MTFP is outlined in the table overleaf and appendix D:

Committed Reserves																
	Balance C/fwd From 2025/26	Proposed Change	Proposed Increase	Revised Balance C/fwd for 2026/27	Estimated 2026/27 Use	Estimated 2027/28 Use	Estimated 2028/29 Use	Estimated 2029/30 Use	Estimated 2030/31 Use	Estimated 2031/32 Use	Estimated 2032/33 Use	Estimated 2033/34 Use	Estimated 2034/35 Use	Estimated 2035/36 Use	Estimated 2036/37 Use	Held to Cover Risk
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Emergency Related Reserves</b>																
Bellwin / Emergency Planning Res	222			222												222
Insurance Reserve	534			534												534
<b>Modernisation Challenge</b>																
Smoothing Reserve	1,400			1,400												1,400
Pensions Reserve	300			300		-200	-100									0
Recruitment Reserve	1,814	-690		1,124		-624	-250	-250								0
Collection Fund Reserve	100			100		-100										0
Carbon Net Zero Reserve	2,000			2,000		-2,000										0
<b>Capital Investment Reserve</b>																
Capital Investment Reserve	2,036		493	2,529		-1,529	-500	-500								0
<b>PFI Annuity Reserve</b>																
PFI Annuity Reserve	1,166			1,166	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	407
<b>Specific Projects</b>																
Health & Safety Reserve	57			57		-57										0
Equipment Reserve	466			466		-466										0
Clothing Reserve	940			940		-940										0
Health and Wellbeing Reserve	7			7		-7										0
Training Reserve	270			270		-170	-100									0
Inflation Reserve	1,200	690		1,890												1,890
<b>Ringfenced Reserves</b>																
Community Risk Management Res	236			236		-126	-110									0
Energy Reserve	111			111		-111										0
New Dimensions Reserve	95			95		-95										0
Forecast Use of Reserves in the year	12,954	0	493	13,447	-69	-6,494	-1,129	-819	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	4,453
Total Earmarked Reserves Bal C/fwd	12,954	0	493	13,447	13,378	6,884	5,755	4,936	4,867	4,798	4,729	4,660	4,591	4,522	4,453	4,453
General Revenue Reserve	3,900	0	0	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>16,854</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17,347</b>	<b>17,278</b>	<b>10,784</b>	<b>9,655</b>	<b>8,836</b>	<b>8,767</b>	<b>8,698</b>	<b>8,629</b>	<b>8,560</b>	<b>8,491</b>	<b>8,422</b>	<b>8,353</b>	<b>8,353</b>

152. The Director of Finance and Procurement recommends that the Authority approve the maintenance of the £13.447m identified above in committed reserves to cover the risks and projects identified in this section of the report and a general reserve of £3.900m.

153. **Members should bear in mind that reserves and balances should only be used to finance one-off expenditure. If such monies are used to fund ongoing revenue expenditure without taking action to reduce underlying expenditure, the Authority would find itself facing the same deficit in the next and future years but without reserves available to finance it. This is underlined by the Auditor's 'Golden Rule' - that "one off" revenue reserves should not be used to support 'ongoing' revenue expenditure.**

154. Members need to consider their strategy on reserves and balances in light of the guidance of the Director of Finance and Procurement.

## **(I) BUDGET TIMETABLE & RESOLUTION**

155. There is a legal requirement for the Authority to set a balanced budget and decide its level of precept before 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026. The Authority meeting is now invited to:

l. Confirm the financial plan set out in Appendix C, and approve the budget requirement of £86,039m for 2026/2027 as outlined in Appendix C.

m. note that the Authority's council tax base for 2026/2027 is 407,050.21, being the aggregate of the tax bases calculated by the Districts.

- n. approve the following amounts calculated in accordance with Sections 42a to 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-

Calculation of Aggregate Amounts Under Section 42a (2) and (3) of the Local Government Act 1992				
		Gross Expenditure 2026/2027	Gross Income 2026/2027	Estimate 2026/2027
		£'000	£'000	£'000
(A)	sec 42 (2) (a)	Service Budget	94,584	94,584
(B)	sec 42 (3) (a)	Income	-8,969	-8,969
		Reserves Movement:		
(A)	sec 42 (2) (c)	Contribution to reserves	493	493
(B)	sec 42A (3) (a)	Contribution from reserves	-69	-69
		<b>Budget Requirement</b>	95,077	86,039
(B)	sec 42A (3) (a)	Spending Funding Assessment	-44,722	-44,722
(B)	sec 42A (3) (a)	Local NNDR Estimate Adjustment	34	34
(B)	sec 42A (3) (a)	Collection Fund Deficit / (Suplus)	-137	-137
		<b>Non-Precept Income</b>	-44,826	-44,826
(c)	In accordance with Sec 42A (4), aggregate of (A) over (B)	<b>Precept Requirement</b>		<b>41,213</b>
		<b>Tax Base</b>		407,050.21
		<b>Precept Requirement / Tax Base:</b>		£101.25
		<b>Basic Tax Amount At Band 'D'</b>		<b>£101.25</b>

156. The valuation bands calculated by the Authority in accordance with Section 47 (1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands:

2026/27	Property Band	Increase	
£		£	%
£67.50	For properties in Band A	3.33	5.19
£78.75	For properties in Band B	3.89	5.20
£90.00	For properties in Band C	4.44	5.19
<b>£101.25</b>	<b>For properties in Band D</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>5.19</b>
£123.75	For properties in Band E	6.11	5.19
£146.25	For properties in Band F	7.22	5.19
£168.75	For properties in Band G	8.33	5.19
£202.50	For properties in Band H	10.00	5.19

157. The Authority calculates the precept amounts payable by each constituent district council pursuant to Section 48 of the Act as follows: -

PRECEPT		AUTHORITY
£		
4,081,691	Payable by	KNOWSLEY
12,442,128	Payable by	LIVERPOOL
9,015,705	Payable by	SEFTON
5,469,727	Payable by	ST.HELENS
10,204,582	Payable by	WIRRAL
<b>41,213,833</b>		

158. The precept payments are to be made by 10 equal instalments on or before the following dates: -

Wednesday	15/04/2026
Friday	22/05/2026
Tuesday	30/06/2026
Wednesday	05/08/2026
Friday	11/09/2026
Monday	19/10/2026
Tuesday	24/11/2026
Monday	04/01/2027
Tuesday	09/02/2027
Wednesday	10/03/2027

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

159. The financial plan makes provision for the necessary investment to ensure the Authority meets and exceeds its Equality and Diversity requirements in addition to work carried out by all staff and teams.

#### **Staff Implications**

160. The proposed MTFP underpins the Authority's ambition to be the best fire and rescue service in the country - our plan ensures that our people are afforded the relevant training, work equipment and personal protective equipment the job requires.

#### **Legal Implications**

161. The Authority must act in accordance with its powers and duties under the legislation, which includes setting a balanced budget and deciding the level of precept prior to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

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**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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162. See executive summary.

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**Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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163. The budget and capital investment programme make large-scale investments in staff Health and Safety.

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**Environmental Implications**

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164. There are no environmental implications directly related to this report.

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

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

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165. The proposed financial plan considers how best to allocate resources and deliver a balanced budget aligned to the Authority's vision and purpose of the service and service priorities.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**CFO/85/25** "MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY BUDGET AND FINANCIAL PLAN 2025/2026 – 2029/2030" Budget Authority 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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<b>BOE</b>	<b>Bank Of England</b>
<b>BPS</b>	<b>Basis Point</b> is a unit of measure equal to 1/100th of 1% (0.01%) used to denote changes in interest rates and financial percentages. One hundred bps equal 1%.
<b>CAPITAL</b>	The Capital Budget covers the money the Authority spends on investing in building, infrastructure and expensive equipment with an asset life of more than one year.
<b>CFO</b>	<b>Chief Fire Officer</b>
<b>CFR</b>	<b>Capital Financing Requirement</b> – measures the amount of capital spending that has not yet been financed by capital receipts, capital grants or contributions from revenue income. It measures the underlying need to borrow for capital purposes, although it may not necessarily occur externally (use of available cash, etc)
<b>CIPFA</b>	<b>Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy</b>

<b>CPI</b>	<b>C</b> onsumer <b>P</b> rice <b>I</b> ndex
<b>CRMP</b>	<b>C</b> ommunity <b>R</b> isk <b>M</b> anagement <b>P</b> lan
<b>FFA</b>	<b>F</b> air <b>F</b> unding <b>R</b> evue
<b>FPS</b>	<b>F</b> irefighters' <b>P</b> ension <b>S</b> cheme
<b>FTE</b>	<b>F</b> ull <b>T</b> ime <b>E</b> quivalent employee number
<b>HFSC</b>	<b>H</b> ome <b>F</b> ire <b>S</b> afety <b>C</b> heck
<b>IFRS</b>	<b>I</b> nternational <b>F</b> inancial <b>R</b> eporting <b>S</b> tandards
<b>LGPS</b>	<b>L</b> ocal <b>G</b> overnment <b>P</b> ension <b>S</b> cheme
<b>MHCLG</b>	<b>M</b> inistry of <b>H</b> ousing, <b>C</b> ommunities and <b>L</b> ocal <b>G</b> overnment
<b>MRP</b>	<b>M</b> inimum <b>R</b> evenue <b>P</b> rovision is an amount set aside from revenue towards the repayment of loan debt
<b>MTFP</b>	<b>M</b> edium- <b>T</b> erm <b>F</b> inancial <b>P</b> lan
<b>NRAT</b>	<b>N</b> ational <b>R</b> esilience <b>A</b> ssurance <b>T</b> eam
<b>PFI</b>	<b>P</b> rivate <b>F</b> inance <b>I</b> nitiative
<b>PPE</b>	<b>P</b> ersonal <b>P</b> rotective <b>E</b> quipment
<b>PWLB</b>	<b>P</b> ublic <b>W</b> orks <b>L</b> oans <b>B</b> oard
<b>RESERVES</b>	Amount set aside to meet future contingencies but whose use does not affect the Authority's net expenditure in a given year. Appropriations to and from reserves may not be made directly from the revenue account.
<b>REVENUE</b>	The revenue budget is the term used to describe the amount the Authority spend on its day-to-day running of services. This includes wages and salaries, property and transport running costs and payments to suppliers. In addition to the running costs of services, the Authority must fund the costs of borrowing money to pay for their capital assets.
<b>SLT</b>	<b>S</b> trategic <b>L</b> eadership <b>T</b> eam
<b>SONIA</b>	<b>S</b> terling <b>O</b> ver <b>N</b> ight <b>I</b> ndex <b>A</b> verage
<b>TDA</b>	<b>T</b> raining & <b>D</b> evelopment <b>A</b> cademy

**UNSUPPORTED BORROWING** No revenue support grant to cover the costs associated with borrowing, and the Authority must earmark revenue fund to cover these costs.

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SERVICE REQUIREMENTS	Draft 2026/27 Budget
	£'000
Fire Service	83,117
Corporate Management	649
NRAT MFRS Lead Authority (Budget Neutral)	0
	83,766
Contingency for Pay/Price Changes	2,349
<b>TOTAL SERVICE EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>86,115</b>
Interest on Balances	-500
<b>NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>85,615</b>
<b><u>Contribution to/(from) Reserves:</u></b>	
<b>Emergency Related Reserves</b>	
Bellwin / Emergency Planning Reserve	0
Insurance Reserve	0
Facing The Future COVID-19 Reserve	0
Collection Fund Deficit Reserve	0
<b>Modernisation Challenge</b>	
Smoothing Reserve	0
Retrospective Holiday Pay	0
Pensions Reserve	0
Recruitment Reserve	0
Invest to Save Reserve / Collaboration Reserve	0
<b>Capital Investment Reserve</b>	
Capital Investment Reserve	493
PFI Annuity Reserve	-69
<b>Specific Projects</b>	
Community Sponsorship Reserve	0
Equipment Reserve	0
Community Engagement Reserve	0
Training Reserve	0
Health and Wellbeing Reserve	0
Inflation Reserve	0
Clothing Reserve	0
<b>Ringfenced Reserves</b>	
King's Trust Reserve	0
Energy Reserve	0
New Dimensions Reserve	0
<b>Movement in Reserves</b>	<b>424</b>
<b>BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>86,039</b>
Fair Funding Assessment	-44,722
Business Rates Yield Adjustment	34
Collection Fund Adjustment	-137
Precept Income	-41,213
<b><u>BUDGET FUNDING</u></b>	<b>-86,039</b>

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS	Draft 2026/27 Budget
<b>EMPLOYEES</b>	
<b>Uniformed</b>	
Firefighters	44,524
Control	2,008
Additional Hours	2,291
<b>TOTAL UNIFORMED</b>	<b>48,823</b>
<b>APT&amp;C and Manual</b>	
APT&C	12,472
Tender Drivers	187
Catering	287
Transport Maintenance	861
Hydrant Technicians	74
Casuals	0
<b>TOTAL APT&amp;C/MANUAL</b>	<b>13,880</b>
<b>Other Employee Expenses</b>	
Allowances	51
Removal Expenses	1
Training Expenses	569
Other Expenses	2
Staff Advertising	5
Development Expenses	108
Employee Insurance	173
MPF Pen Fixed Rate	0
Enhanced Pensions	70
SSP & SMP Reimbursements	0
Catering Expenditure	168
HFRA Capitalisation Payroll	-375
<b>TOTAL OTHER EMPLOYEE EXPENSES</b>	<b>772</b>
<b>Pensions</b>	
Injury Pension	1,825
Sanction Charges	47
Ill Health Retirement Charges	130
Injury Gratuity	0
<b>TOTAL PENSIONS</b>	<b>2,002</b>
<b>TOTAL EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>65,477</b>
<b>PREMISES</b>	
Building Maintenance Repairs	19
Site Maintenance Costs	18
Energy	1,371
Rent	50
Rates	2,046
Water	370
Fixtures	8
Insurance	74
<b>TOTAL PREMISES</b>	<b>3,956</b>
<b>TRANSPORT</b>	
Direct Transport	438
Tunnel & Toll Fees	11
Operating Lease	191
Other Transport Costs	534
Car Allowances	72
Insurance	261
Driving Licences	7
<b>TOTAL TRANSPORT</b>	<b>1,514</b>

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS	Draft 2026/27 Budget
<b>SUPPLIES &amp; SERVICES</b>	
Administrative Supplies	9
Operational Supplies	424
Hydrants	11
Consumables	66
Training Supplies	232
Fire Prevention Supplies	47
Catering Supplies	5
Uniforms	341
Printing & Stationery	95
Professional Fees/Service	639
Communications	884
Postage	18
Computing	413
Medicals	340
Travel & Subsistence	59
Grants/Subscriptions	134
Advertising	10
Insurances	73
Furniture	10
Laundry	110
Hospitality	11
<b>TOTAL SUPPLIES &amp; SERVICES</b>	<b>3,931</b>
<b>AGENCY SERVICES</b>	
Super Fund Admin	168
ICT Service Provider	2,092
ICT Managed Suppliers	563
PFI Unitary Charges ((Int/Principal/Op Costs)	3,278
Estates Service Provider	2,152
<b>TOTAL AGENCY SERVICES</b>	<b>8,253</b>
<b>CENTRAL EXPENSES</b>	
Finance & Computing	570
Central Expenses	1
<b>TOTAL CENTRAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>571</b>
<b>CAPITAL FINANCING</b>	
PWLB Debt Charges	7,530
MRB Debt Charges	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital	375
Early Settlement of Debt (Pfi Refin)	-22
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL FINANCING</b>	<b>7,883</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>91,586</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	
Specific Grants	5,597
Sales	4
Fees & Charges	1,199
Rents etc	1,169
Recharges Secondments	210
Contributions	101
Recharges Internal	179
Other Income	10
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>8,469</b>
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>83,117</b>

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS	Draft 2026/27 Budget
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
<b>Finance &amp; Legal costs</b>	
Finance Officer	79
Legal Officer	97
<b>Democratic Representation</b>	
- Travel & Subsistence	7
- Training & Conference Fees	3
- Members Allowances	237
- Software/Computing	10
<b>Central Expenses (1030)</b>	
Bank Charges	16
District Audit Fees	111
Subscriptions	89
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>649</b>

## Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31

Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
Buildings & Land	9,648,800	4,357,000	2,573,300	993,500	1,102,500	622,500
Fire Safety	3,175,000	635,000	635,000	635,000	635,000	635,000
ICT	11,139,900	2,256,000	978,200	2,961,400	3,707,900	1,236,400
NRAT Resilience Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operational Equipment & Hydrants	6,881,500	3,518,000	693,000	902,000	761,000	1,007,500
Vehicles	13,349,900	4,981,000	1,663,900	690,000	3,465,000	2,550,000
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>44,195,100</b>	<b>15,747,000</b>	<b>6,543,400</b>	<b>6,181,900</b>	<b>9,671,400</b>	<b>6,051,400</b>
Financing Available	Total £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2029/30 £
Capital Receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0
RCCO	1,875,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000
Capital Reserves	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Non Borrowing</b>	<b>1,875,000</b>	<b>375,000</b>	<b>375,000</b>	<b>375,000</b>	<b>375,000</b>	<b>375,000</b>
Unsupported Borrowing	42,320,100	15,372,000	6,168,400	5,806,900	9,296,400	5,676,400
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>44,195,100</b>	<b>15,747,000</b>	<b>6,543,400</b>	<b>6,181,900</b>	<b>9,671,400</b>	<b>6,051,400</b>

**Buildings Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
<b>Major Site Works</b>						
BLD055 FS Refurbishment Bromborough	55,000	55,000				
BLD057 FS Refurbishment Crosby	81,000	81,000				
BLD063 FS Refurbishment Kirkby	1,800,000	1,800,000				
BLD073 SHQ Museum	191,000			191,000		
BLD087 FS Refurbishment City Centre	200,000	200,000				
BLD088 FS Refurbishment Kensington	100,000	100,000				
BLD089 FS Refurbishment Toxteth	152,500		152,500			
BLD090 FS Refurbishment Wallasey	1,500,000		1,500,000			
BLD093 Marine Fire 1 Refurbishment	138,300	20,000	118,300			
BLD098 SHQ Refurbishment	500,000				500,000	
	<b>4,717,800</b>	<b>2,256,000</b>	<b>1,770,800</b>	<b>191,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>	
<b>LLAR Accommodation Works</b>						
BLD075 LLAR Accommodation Newton-le-Willows	10,000	10,000				
	<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>				
<b>General Station Upgrade Works</b>						
BLD001 Roofs & Canopy Replacements	425,000	245,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
BLD003 Appliance Room Door Repairs	125,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD004 Concrete Yard Repairs	122,500	32,500	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500
BLD005 Tower Improvements	905,000	445,000	215,000	215,000	15,000	15,000
BLD013 Appliance Room Floors	188,500	68,500	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
BLD016 Community Station Investment	50,000	50,000				
BLD033 Sanitary Accommodation Refurbishment	200,000	120,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
	<b>2,016,000</b>	<b>986,000</b>	<b>357,500</b>	<b>357,500</b>	<b>157,500</b>	<b>157,500</b>
<b>Other Works</b>						
BLD007 LEV System in Appliance Rooms	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD011 Capital Refurbishment	115,000	15,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD014 Boiler Replacements	125,000	65,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
BLD018 Conference Facilities SHQ	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD020 5 Year Electrical Testing	145,000	45,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD026 Corporate Signage	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD032 Power Strategy (Generators)	85,000	25,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
BLD034 Office Accommodation	175,000	75,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD044 Asbestos Surveys	70,000	30,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
BLD053 Lighting Replacement	20,000					20,000
BLD058 HVAC - Heating, Ventilation & Air Con	150,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
BLD060 Equality Act/Access Compliance	500,000	300,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
BLD061 Lighting Conductors Surge Protectors	35,000	15,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD062 Emergency Lighting	50,000	30,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD067 Gym Equipment Replacement	145,000	45,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD068 SHQ JCC	10,000	10,000				
BLD070 Workshop Enhancement	70,000	70,000				
BLD094 Security Enhancement Works	135,000	35,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD095 Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Works	225,000	125,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD096 Passive Strategy	125,000	45,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
BLD099 Photovoltaic Panels (Renewable Energy)	300,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
CON001 Energy Conservation Non-Salix	150,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
EQU002 White Goods & Catering Equipment	75,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
EQU003 Furniture Replacement Programme	125,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
	<b>2,905,000</b>	<b>1,105,000</b>	<b>445,000</b>	<b>445,000</b>	<b>445,000</b>	<b>465,000</b>
	<b>9,648,800</b>	<b>4,357,000</b>	<b>2,573,300</b>	<b>993,500</b>	<b>1,102,500</b>	<b>622,500</b>

**Fire Safety Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
FIR002 Smoke Alarms (HFRA)	<b>1,175,000</b>	235,000	235,000	235,000	235,000	235,000
FIR005 Installation costs (HFRA)	<b>1,875,000</b>	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000	375,000
FIR006 Deaf Alarms (HFRA)	<b>125,000</b>	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
	<b>3,175,000</b>	<b>635,000</b>	<b>635,000</b>	<b>635,000</b>	<b>635,000</b>	<b>635,000</b>

**ICT Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
<b>IT002 ICT Software</b>						
Software Licences	10,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
MDT Software Solution Refresh	175,000	100,000				75,000
Security Info & Event Management Software	494,000	100,000	98,500	98,500	98,500	98,500
3 Yr Firewall	10,000			10,000		
3 Year PRTG Subscription License	15,000			15,000		
3 Year Mitel Software Upgrade	20,000		10,000			10,000
Threat Defence License	57,000	17,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Microsoft EA Agreement (Enterprise Products)	1,277,000	251,000	256,500	256,500	256,500	256,500
Microsoft EA Agreement (E5 Security)	423,000	85,000	84,500	84,500	84,500	84,500
Microsoft EA Agreement (Subscription Products)	32,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
Microsoft EA Agreement (Additional Products)	62,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500
	<b>2,576,000</b>	<b>574,000</b>	<b>480,500</b>	<b>495,500</b>	<b>470,500</b>	<b>555,500</b>
<b>IT003 ICT Hardware</b>						
Desktops (target 20%)	240,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
Laptops/Surface Pros/Tablets/Docking Stns (target 20%)	602,500	120,500	120,500	120,500	120,500	120,500
Monitors & Monitor Arms (target 20%)	70,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
Peripherals replacement (target 20%)	15,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Mobile device replacement (target 20%)	62,000	12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400
Windows 11 Hardware Upgrade	100,000				100,000	
Fire Control & OSR AV Refresh	60,500				60,500	
SHQ Conf AV Refresh	215,000				215,000	
TDA Conf AV Refresh	250,000				250,000	
Station AV Refresh	150,000				150,000	
SHQ Offices & TDA AV 5-year refresh	100,000					100,000
Backup Tape Drive 5-year asset refresh	25,000		25,000			
IPTV 5-year asset refresh	36,800		36,800			
	<b>1,926,800</b>	<b>197,900</b>	<b>259,700</b>	<b>197,900</b>	<b>973,400</b>	<b>297,900</b>
<b>IT005 ICT Servers</b>						
Server/storage replacement (target 20%)	325,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000
Server/storage growth	70,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
Mitel Server Upgrade Corporate Telephony	150,000	150,000				
Virtulisation 5 Year Refresh	450,000				450,000	
SAN 5 Year Refresh	195,000	195,000				
	<b>1,190,000</b>	<b>424,000</b>	<b>79,000</b>	<b>79,000</b>	<b>529,000</b>	<b>79,000</b>
<b>IT018 ICT Network</b>						
Network Switches/Router replacement	10,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Network Switches/Routers Growth	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Network Data Port Replacement	50,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Mitel IP Telephony Upgrade (inc.Fire Control)	140,000			140,000		
MDT Wireless Network Replacement	50,000	50,000				
Public Wi-Fi Replacement	15,000					15,000
5 Year Core Network Switch/Router upgrade	600,000				600,000	
5 Year Secondary Fire Control backup Tel/Inf refresh	30,000				30,000	
5 Year Wireless Access Points and Wireless Controllers	150,000				150,000	
5 Year PSTN replacement asset refresh	275,000	125,000			150,000	
	<b>1,345,000</b>	<b>192,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>157,000</b>	<b>947,000</b>	<b>32,000</b>
<b>IT026 ICT Operational Equipment</b>						
Station Equipment Replacement	50,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Crosby Refurbishment	10,000	10,000				
Kirkby Refurbishment	35,000	35,000				
MF1 Refurbishment	10,000		10,000			
Toxteth Refurbishment	10,000		10,000			
Wallasey Refurbishment	35,000		35,000			
SHQ Refurbishment	30,000				30,000	
5 Yearly Station UPS Replacement	70,000					70,000
LRAD/VLS Replacement	70,000					70,000
GPS Repeater 5-year asset refresh	55,000		55,000			
Toughpad Asset Refresh - Vehicles	150,000	150,000				
Station End Network Equipment Asset Refresh	140,000	140,000				
ICU existing hardware 5-year asset refresh	20,000	20,000				
MDT (Screen & CPU) Front Line Vehicles asset refresh	210,000	210,000				
	<b>895,000</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>

**ICT Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
<b><u>IT027 ICT Security</u></b>						
Remote Access Security FOBS	10,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Celestix 3-year renewal - VPN tokens	60,000	30,000			30,000	
Replacement of PfSense Firewalls	100,000					100,000
	<b>170,000</b>	<b>32,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>32,000</b>	<b>102,000</b>
<b><u>IT058 New Emergency Services Network (ESN)</u></b>						
ESN Radios / Infrastructure	54,300	54,300				
	<b>54,300</b>	<b>54,300</b>				
<b><u>IT063 Planning Intelligence and Performance System</u></b>						
PIPS System upgrade	120,000				120,000	
	<b>120,000</b>				<b>120,000</b>	
<b><u>Other IT Schemes</u></b>						
IT030 ICT Projects/Upgrades	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
IT033 Incident Ground Management Software	50,000	50,000				
IT055 Fire Control ICT (Non Vision)	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
IT059 ESMCP Project Control Room Integration	66,100	66,100				
IT062 Capita Vision 5 Update - ICCS ITHC	50,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
IT066 ESN Ready	20,700	20,700				
IT067 DCS Upgrade	226,000				226,000	
IT068 TDA Command & Control Suite	350,000				350,000	
IT070 H&S Application Renewal/Replacement	50,000	50,000				
IT073 CAD Replacement	2,000,000			2,000,000		
	<b>2,862,800</b>	<b>206,800</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>2,020,000</b>	<b>596,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>
	<b>11,139,900</b>	<b>2,256,000</b>	<b>978,200</b>	<b>2,961,400</b>	<b>3,707,900</b>	<b>1,236,400</b>

**Operational Equipment Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
<b><u>OPS001 Gas Tight Suits Other PPE</u></b>						
Gas Tight Suits	77,500	21,500	7,000	35,000	7,000	7,000
Bump Hats	11,000	5,000	2,500	2,500	1,000	
	<b>88,500</b>	<b>26,500</b>	<b>9,500</b>	<b>37,500</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>7,000</b>
<b><u>OPS003 Hydraulic Rescue Equipment</u></b>						
Hydraulic Rescue Equipment - Replacement Prog	100,000					100,000
Air Lifting Equipment - Air Bags & Control Units	40,000		10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
	<b>140,000</b>		<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>110,000</b>
<b><u>OPS005 Resuscitation Equipment</u></b>						
Resuscitation Rescue Equipment	55,500	5,500	10,000	20,000	10,000	10,000
	<b>55,500</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b><u>OPS009 POD Equipment</u></b>						
Demountable Unit Refurbishment	290,000	90,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Gas Monitors	65,000		10,000	10,000	25,000	20,000
	<b>355,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>70,000</b>
<b><u>OPS022 Improvements to Fleet</u></b>						
Improvements to Fleet	400,000	50,000	50,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
PPV Fans	71,500	6,500	25,000	25,000	10,000	5,000
Smoke Blockers	28,000	2,000	2,000	20,000	2,000	2,000
	<b>499,500</b>	<b>58,500</b>	<b>77,000</b>	<b>145,000</b>	<b>112,000</b>	<b>107,000</b>
<b><u>OPS024 BA Equipment</u></b>						
BA Equipment	1,009,600	809,600	40,000	40,000	80,000	40,000
Cylinder Equipment	640,000	640,000				
Telemetry sets	1,062,000	1,062,000				
Face masks	98,900	98,900				
IT Equipment	126,500	126,500				
Vehicles Equipment	59,000	59,000				
Other Equipment	49,000	49,000				
	<b>3,045,000</b>	<b>2,845,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>
<b><u>OPS036 Radiation/Gas Detection Equipment</u></b>						
Radiation Detection Equipment	106,000	12,000	45,000	45,000	2,000	2,000
Single Gas Detection Equipment	26,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	20,000	
	<b>132,000</b>	<b>14,000</b>	<b>47,000</b>	<b>47,000</b>	<b>22,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b><u>OPS049 Bulk Foam Equipment</u></b>						
Bulk Foam Attack Equipment	105,000	25,000		20,000	50,000	10,000
Bulk Foam Stock	5,000	5,000				
	<b>110,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>		<b>20,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b><u>OPS059 Fire Ground Equipment</u></b>						
Fire Ground Equipment	46,000	5,500	5,500	15,000	10,000	10,000
Fire Ground Communications	11,000		5,500			5,500
	<b>57,000</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>11,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>15,500</b>
<b><u>OPS060 SRT Equipment</u></b>						
SRT Ropes	97,000	14,200	14,400	34,200	19,200	15,000
SRT DOG	5,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
SRT MTA	4,500	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	500
SRT Equipment	78,200	19,000	19,300	19,500	19,400	1,000
SRT Water	92,800	4,800	19,300	29,300	19,400	20,000
	<b>277,500</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>55,000</b>	<b>85,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>37,500</b>

**Operational Equipment Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
<b><u>Other Operational Equipment</u></b>						
OPS011 Thermal imaging cameras	<b>36,000</b>	5,500	5,500	5,000	10,000	10,000
OPS016 Gas Detection Equipment (MYRA DS)	<b>148,000</b>	100,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
OPS023 Water Rescue Equipment	<b>136,500</b>	16,500	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
OPS026 Rope Replacement	<b>96,500</b>	16,500	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
OPS027 Light Portable Pumps	<b>60,000</b>		30,000	30,000		
OPS031 CCTV Equipment	<b>133,000</b>	5,000	54,000	54,000		20,000
OPS033 Marine Rescue Equipment	<b>60,500</b>	11,500	12,000	12,000	15,000	10,000
OPS034 Operational Ladders	<b>115,000</b>	15,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
OPS038 Water Delivery System	<b>50,000</b>	5,000	5,000	20,000	10,000	10,000
OPS039 Water Delivery Hoses	<b>122,000</b>	20,000	21,000	21,000	30,000	30,000
OPS052 DEFRA FRNE	<b>30,000</b>			10,000	10,000	10,000
OPS054 Electrical Equipment	<b>148,500</b>	28,500	30,000	50,000	20,000	20,000
OPS056 PV Stop (Solar Panels)	<b>39,000</b>			24,000	15,000	
OPS058 Operational Drones	<b>107,500</b>	5,000	32,500	10,000	30,000	30,000
OPS061 Hi-Rise Kits	<b>33,000</b>	15,500	2,500	2,500	10,000	2,500
OPS062 Marine Firefighting	<b>69,000</b>	62,000	2,000	5,000		
OPS063 Emerging Technologies	<b>250,000</b>	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
OPS064 Wildfire Equipment	<b>22,000</b>	10,000	5,000	5,000		2,000
OPS065 Communications	<b>280,000</b>					280,000
	<b>1,936,500</b>	<b>366,000</b>	<b>336,500</b>	<b>385,500</b>	<b>287,000</b>	<b>561,500</b>
<b><u>Hydrants</u></b>						
HYD001 Hydrants (New Installations)	<b>92,500</b>	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500
HYD002 Hydrants (Replacements)	<b>92,500</b>	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500
	<b>185,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>
	<b>6,881,500</b>	<b>3,518,000</b>	<b>693,000</b>	<b>902,000</b>	<b>761,000</b>	<b>1,007,500</b>

**Vehicles Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Price Per Unit	Total		2026/27		2027/28		2028/29		2029/30		2030/31	
		Units	Cost £	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£
<b>VEH002 Ancillary Vehicles</b>													
<u>Cars</u>													
Pool Cars - Skoda Fabia	25,050	4	100,200	4	100,200								
Pool Cars - Possible Electric 25/26 Price	25,000	19	475,000	19	475,000								
Pool Cars - Possible Electric 28/29 Price	30,000	6	180,000					6	180,000				
Officer Response: Toyota Corolla Hybrid 2025/26 Price	30,000		26,800		26,800								
Officer Response: Toyota Corolla Hybrid 2029/30 Price	35,000	22	770,000							15	525,000	7	245,000
Vehicle Trackers			16,700		16,700								
Ford Focus Automatic	35,000	1	35,000							1	35,000		
People Carrier, 7 seater	40,000	2	80,000							2	80,000		
Mini Bus, 17 Seater	60,000	2	120,000							2	120,000		
<u>4X4s</u>													
Isuzu	35,000	1	35,000	1	35,000								
<u>Vans</u>													
Master/Transit Panel	36,900	1	36,900	1	36,900								
Ford Transit	38,500	2	77,000	2	77,000								
Ford Transit Connect, possible electric	35,000	2	70,000									2	70,000
Panel	38,000	1	38,000	1	38,000								
Panel - RTC reduction	45,000	1	45,000	1	45,000								
Courier	40,000	4	160,000	4	160,000								
Ford Courier, possible electric	30,000	12	360,000									12	360,000
Water Rescue Van	50,000	1	50,000	1	50,000								
Operational Equipment Transit	40,000	2	80,000			2	80,000						
Hydrant Transit	40,000	2	80,000			2	80,000						
T&DA Transit	40,000	2	80,000			2	80,000						
Occupational Health Transit	50,000	1	50,000					1	50,000				
<u>Mini Buses</u>													
Fire Service - Blue Light	45,000	1	45,000	1	45,000								
Princes Trust - Disabled Access	44,000	1	44,000	1	44,000								
Princes Trust	36,900	3	110,700	3	110,700								
			<b>3,165,300</b>		<b>1,260,300</b>		<b>240,000</b>		<b>230,000</b>		<b>760,000</b>		<b>675,000</b>
<b>VEH004 Special Vehicles</b>													
Prime Movers Long Term Capability Management	181,400	2	362,800			2	362,800						
POD Long Term Capability Management	210,600	1	210,600	1	210,600								
Prime Movers	210,000	2	420,000			2	420,000						
Incident Command Unit	650,000	1	650,000	1	650,000								
BA Support Unit (POD) - NEW	250,000	1	250,000	1	250,000								
Wildfire Appliance 4x4	75,000	2	150,000	2	150,000								
Curtain Sided Truck (Driving School)	86,000	1	86,000			1	86,000						
Water Rescue Unit	70,400	1	70,400	1	70,400								
Crane Lorry	200,000	1	200,000			1	200,000						
Water Bowser Appliance	275,000	1	275,000			1	275,000						
Welfare Vehicle	90,000	1	90,000							1	90,000		
Fork Lift Truck	75,000	1	75,000							1	75,000		
TDA Tele Truck	75,000	1	75,000									1	75,000
Youth Engagement Vehicle	100,000	1	100,000							1	100,000		
			<b>3,014,800</b>		<b>1,331,000</b>		<b>1,343,800</b>				<b>265,000</b>		<b>75,000</b>
<b>VEH010 Marine Rescue Vessels</b>													
RNLI Class 75 Rib Boats (Equipment)	200,000	2	458,700		43,600		15,100	2	400,000				
			<b>458,700</b>		<b>43,600</b>		<b>15,100</b>		<b>400,000</b>				
<b>VEH001 Fire Appliances</b>													
2025/26 Price - CFO/01/2526	370,000		3,300		3,300								
2026/27 Price - CFO/01/2526	379,200	6	2,275,200	6	2,275,200								
2029/30 Price - CFO/01/2526	400,000	6	2,400,000							6	2,400,000		
2030/31 Price	450,000	4	1,800,000									4	1,800,000
			<b>6,478,500</b>		<b>2,278,500</b>						<b>2,400,000</b>		<b>1,800,000</b>
<b>WOR001 Workshop Equipment</b>													
Machine Shop Equipment			65,900		15,900				50,000				
Workshop Equipment			10,000						10,000				
Rolling Road Replacement (MOT bay)			11,700		11,700								
Workshop Equip Somers vehicle Lift.	25,000	1	25,000			1	25,000						
HGV Brake Tester	40,000	1	40,000			1	40,000						
2 Post Vehicle Lift	20,000	2	40,000							2	40,000		
4 Post Vehicle Lift	20,000	2	40,000	2	40,000								
			<b>232,600</b>		<b>67,600</b>		<b>65,000</b>		<b>60,000</b>		<b>40,000</b>		
			<b>13,349,900</b>		<b>4,981,000</b>		<b>1,663,900</b>		<b>690,000</b>		<b>3,465,000</b>		<b>2,550,000</b>

2026/27 - 2030/31 MTFP					
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>NET SPEND IN 2025/26 MTFP</b>	<b>79,402</b>	<b>81,093</b>	<b>82,684</b>	<b>84,426</b>	<b>84,426</b>
<b>2026/27 MTFP Issues to build in future MTFP:-</b>					
Impact of the <b>2025/26 Grey Book Pay Award</b> (Increase of 0.70%)	330	330	330	330	330
Impact of the <b>2025/26 Green Book Pay Award</b> (Increase of 0.70%)	100	100	100	100	100
Historic <b>Employers National Insurance</b> Grant now consolidated within the Fair Funding Assessment	425	425	425	425	425
Impact <b>2026/27 Pay Award</b> moving from <b>2.5% p.a. to 3% p.a.</b>	254	314	314	314	314
Impact <b>2025 LGPS Actuarial Valuation</b> reduction in employers pension contribution <b>17.9% - 5.9%</b> 2026/27 to 2028/29 then assume only <b>50%</b> of the saving for 2029/30 & 2030/31	-1,150	-1,150	-1,150	-575	-575
2030/31 Inflation Provision					1,796
Impact of Higher Prices (Inflation/Contingency)	622	784	953	957	957
2030/31 MRP/Interest - Additional year and Inflationary Impact on cost of Capital Goods					90
Contribution to Capital Reserve to fund Capital Programme and additional Inflationary Pressures	493				
Unavoidable Growth net of Savings	476	425	282	600	480
Provision for the review of Establishment to meet Job Evaluation / Recruitment / Retention / Growth Challenges	400	300	300	300	300
Historic Business Rates Grant compensation for under-indexation of tax rates now consolidated within the Fair Funding Assessment	5,095	5,095	5,095	5,095	5,095
Transitional Protection for 2026/27 - Fire and Rescue real terms floor 3.8%	-408				
TOTAL	6,637	6,623	6,649	7,546	9,312
<b>FORECAST NET SPEND IN 2026/27 MTFP</b>	<b>86,039</b>	<b>87,716</b>	<b>89,332</b>	<b>91,971</b>	<b>93,737</b>
<b>FORECAST FUNDING IN CURRENT MTFP</b>					
<b><u>Government Funding-Settlement Funding Assessment:</u></b>					
Fair Funding Assessment Baseline Funding actual for 2026/27, then 2.29% p.a. increase in 2027/28, then 2.02% p.a. increase in 2028/29, then 1% p.a. increase from 2029/30 onwards	-19,926	-20,383	-20,794	-21,002	-21,212
Fair Funding Assessment Revenue Support Grant actual for 2026/27, then 3.74% p.a. decrease in 2027/28, then 4.47% p.a. decrease in 2028/29, then 1% increase from 2029/30 onwards	-24,796	-23,868	-22,800	-23,028	-23,258
Fair Funding Allocation	-44,722	-44,251	-43,595	-44,030	-44,470
<b>Assumed Government Funding - Fair Funding Assessment</b>	<b>-44,722</b>	<b>-44,251</b>	<b>-43,595</b>	<b>-44,030</b>	<b>-44,470</b>
<b><u>Adjustment forecast Business Rates yield based on NNDR1 returns</u></b>					
Adjust for Local Business Rate income forecast from Districts Business Rates Collection Fund (surplus)/deficit	34	0	0	0	0
Adjustment to Local Business Rates income forecast	-28	0	0	0	0
	6	0	0	0	0
<b><u>Council Tax -</u></b>					
Base Precept Income	-38,391	-41,213	-43,465	-45,738	-46,885
Council Tax Base increase of 2.05% in 2026/27 then 0.5% p.a.	-787	-206	-217	-229	-234
Precept Increase of £5.00 in 2026/27, £5.00 2027/28 and £5.00 in 2028/29, then increase of 2% p.a. from 2029/30 onwards	-2,035	-2,045	-2,056	-919	-942
Council Tax Collection Fund (surplus)/deficit	-109				
<b>Forecast Council Tax Income</b>	<b>-41,322</b>	<b>-43,465</b>	<b>-45,738</b>	<b>-46,885</b>	<b>-48,062</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>-86,039</b>	<b>-87,716</b>	<b>-89,332</b>	<b>-90,915</b>	<b>-92,532</b>
<b>Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,056</b>	<b>1,205</b>

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Committed Reserves																
	Balance C/fwd From 2025/26	Proposed Change	Proposed Increase	Revised Balance C/fwd for 2026/27	Estimated 2026/27 Use	Estimated 2027/28 Use	Estimated 2028/29 Use	Estimated 2029/30 Use	Estimated 2030/31 Use	Estimated 2031/32 Use	Estimated 2032/33 Use	Estimated 2033/34 Use	Estimated 2034/35 Use	Estimated 2035/36 Use	Estimated 2036/37 Use	Held to Cover Risk
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Emergency Related Reserves</b>																
Bellwin / Emergency Planning Res	222			222												222
Insurance Reserve	534			534												534
<b>Modernisation Challenge</b>																
Smoothing Reserve	1,400			1,400												1,400
Pensions Reserve	300			300		-200	-100									0
Recruitment Reserve	1,814	-690		1,124		-624	-250	-250								0
Collection Fund Reserve	100			100		-100										0
Carbon Net Zero Reserve	2,000			2,000		-2,000										0
<b>Capital Investment Reserve</b>																
Capital Investment Reserve	2,036		493	2,529		-1,529	-500	-500								0
<b>PFI Annuity Reserve</b>	1,166			1,166	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	407
<b>Specific Projects</b>																
Health & Safety Reserve	57			57		-57										0
Equipment Reserve	466			466		-466										0
Clothing Reserve	940			940		-940										0
Health and Wellbeing Reserve	7			7		-7										0
Training Reserve	270			270		-170	-100									0
Inflation Reserve	1,200	690		1,890												1,890
<b>Ringfenced Reserves</b>																
Community Risk Management Res	236			236		-126	-110									0
Energy Reserve	111			111		-111										0
New Dimensions Reserve	95			95		-95										0
<b>Forecast Use of Reserves in the year</b>	12,954	0	493	13,447	-69	-6,494	-1,129	-819	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	-69	4,453
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves Bal C/fwd</b>	<b>12,954</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>13,447</b>	<b>13,378</b>	<b>6,884</b>	<b>5,755</b>	<b>4,936</b>	<b>4,867</b>	<b>4,798</b>	<b>4,729</b>	<b>4,660</b>	<b>4,591</b>	<b>4,522</b>	<b>4,453</b>	<b>4,453</b>
<b>General Revenue Reserve</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>3,900</b>
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>16,854</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17,347</b>	<b>17,278</b>	<b>10,784</b>	<b>9,655</b>	<b>8,836</b>	<b>8,767</b>	<b>8,698</b>	<b>8,629</b>	<b>8,560</b>	<b>8,491</b>	<b>8,422</b>	<b>8,353</b>	<b>8,353</b>

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## Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority

### Proposed Fees & Charges: 2026/27

TYPE OF INCOME		eFin Sales Product Code	eFin Stock Product Code	Net Charge £	VAT £	VAT Code	Total Charge £
a)	Special services ('non-emergency' calls) per hour (or part hour) upto rank of Watch Manager	SC19 / SC403 SC404	-	475.00	95.00	S	<b>570.00</b>
b)	Environment & Safety Information Act 1988: Copies of entries from the register	SC17	-	54.00	Non-VAT	OU	<b>54.00</b>
c)	Ex-directory lines (Automatic Fire Alarms)	OPS001	-	646.00	129.20	S	<b>775.20</b>
d)	Incident Investigation Team (full report) *	SC400	-	1,218.00	243.60	S	<b>1,461.60</b>
e) Private hydrant testing:							
	- 1st Test	WAT001	-	132.00	26.40	S	<b>158.40</b>
	- Any subsequent test	WAT002	-	37.00	7.40	S	<b>44.40</b>
f)	Inspection of hydrant records	WAT004	-	199.00	39.80	S	<b>238.80</b>
g)	Hydrant flow and pressure readings	WAT003	-	63.00	12.60	S	<b>75.60</b>
h)	Standard incident reports (IRS) *	SC20	-	199.00	Non-VAT	OU	<b>199.00</b>
i)	Special report or search of statistical records (per year, per location) *	SC23	-	199.00	Non-VAT	OU	<b>199.00</b>
j)	The reproduction or copy of a document / report produced by MFRS (Protection)	SC18	-	199.00	Non-VAT	OU	<b>199.00</b>
k)	Interviews (per hour, per customer, per officer, up to rank of Area Manager)	SC2	-	199.00	Non-VAT	OU	<b>199.00</b>
l)	Photographs (per photograph) *	SC402	-	7.00	Non-VAT	OU	<b>7.00</b>
m)	Video footage (per hour) *	SC401	-	199.00	Non-VAT	OU	<b>199.00</b>
n)	Dry riser tests	SC29	-	235.00	47.00	S	<b>282.00</b>
o)	Attendance at Football Grounds	OPS002	-	407.00	81.40	S	<b>488.40</b>
p) Fire safety – alarms (General Public)							
	- Alarm 1	-	23139120FB	18.37	3.67	S	<b>22.04</b>
	- Alarm 2	-	23139120FB	24.85	4.97	S	<b>29.82</b>
	- Alarm 3	-	23139120FB	31.33	6.27	S	<b>37.60</b>
	- Alarm 4	-	23139120FB	37.81	7.56	S	<b>45.37</b>
	- Alarm 5	-	23139120FB	44.29	8.86	S	<b>53.15</b>

**Note:**

- Other than Fire Safety Equipment, the rates for 2026/27 are those approved for 2025/26, increased with the Firefighters pay award (3.2%).
- For convenience, the values are rounded up to the nearest whole £1.00 and VAT added to that figure where appropriate.
- Ex-Directory Lines (i.e. Automatic Fire Alarms) have been increased in line with the Consumer Price Index (3.4%).

\* Items marked with an asterisk are non-chargeable where the General Data Protection Regulation applies.

# Examples include, but not limited to:

- o Lift Rescues;
- o Removal of debris from premises, highways etc.;
- o Provision or removal of water such as filling swimming pools or barriers, pumping out basements;
- o Removal of dangerous structures such as scaffolding, slates and guttering, chimney stacks, hoardings and aerials);
- o Effecting entry to premises i.e. lock ins, lock outs

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<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>BUDGET AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>26 FEBRUARY 2026</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/40/2526</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE, DEB APPLETON</b> <b>AREA MANAGER, MARK BALDWIN</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>HEAD OF DATA AND TECHNOLOGY, PAUL TERRY,</b> <b>HEAD OF ESTATES, STEWART WOODS,</b> <b>TRANSPORT &amp; EQUIPMENT MAINTANENCE MANAGER, DAVE SEASMAN</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A:</b>	<b>ESTATES / PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>
	<b>APPENDIX B:</b>	<b>ICT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>
	<b>APPENDIX C:</b>	<b>TRANSPORT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>

## **Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to set out how Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority ('the Authority'), plans to align its physical assets and systems with its corporate aims and objectives over the next 5 years (2026/27 – 2030/31).

## **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that Members approve the 2026/27-2030/31 Asset Management Plans provided as appendices to this report.

## **Introduction and Background**

3. The report introduces the Asset Management Plans, which are strategic plans that set out how the Authority will use its physical assets in an efficient and effective manner over the various life cycles of the assets to support service delivery.

4. The Asset Management Plans take account of the financial and environmental challenges faced by the Authority, whilst delivering its aspirations for the future.
5. The plans underpin the changes that are detailed in the Authority's current Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), Service Delivery Plan, People Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan, thereby meeting expectations of both internal and external service users.
6. The asset management arrangements divide the Authority's physical resources into three broad areas:
  - Buildings, land and contents
  - Data & Technology (D&T) in the ICT Asset Management Plan
  - Transport/Vehicle fleet
7. The Asset Management Plan for each of the three areas sets out the strategic goals for the asset portfolio by outlining what programmes will be delivered, the methods of programme delivery, and what assets and resources will be required.
8. The Asset Management Plans enable the practical implementation of the Authority's strategic goals and helps in identifying the optimal asset base that is necessary to support service delivery requirements.
9. The underlying principle in developing Asset Management Plans is that each asset will deliver future benefit to the Authority by supporting service delivery, whether directly or indirectly.
10. The Asset Management Plans also acknowledge that it is important to ensure the provision of physical assets which fully enable staff to work in the most effective, efficient and productive way possible.
11. The Asset Management Plans should be viewed in conjunction with other strategic documents, in particular, the CRMP, People Plan, Capital Strategy and Capital Programme, supporting and informing the Financial Strategy and the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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12. All Asset Management Plans acknowledge the need to comply with all relevant equalities' legislation and best practice. Equality Impact assessments are carried out in relation to the CRMP, People Plan, Service Delivery Plan and individual projects and programmes within the Asset Management Plans.

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### **Staff Implications**

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13. The plans are reflective of the statutory duties placed on the Fire and Rescue Service including the Public Sector Equality Duty and health and safety responsibilities, all of which are considered within the respective plans. The plans demonstrate the Services' ambition to reflect the communities it serves whilst keeping the public safe.

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**Legal Implications**

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14. Each plan recognises the relevant legislative and regulatory requirement of the particular area and details how compliance will be achieved.

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**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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15. There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.
16. The Asset Management Plans are essential to enable use of financial resources in the most efficient and effective way. They provide supporting information that enables the prioritisation of both capital and revenue expenditure on each of the asset groups to feed into the Authority's 2026/27 – 2030/31 Medium-Term Financial Plan elsewhere on today's agenda.
17. The focus on managing assets to support strategic change programmes plays a crucial role towards the Authority's aims of securing measurable efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money in delivery of its services.

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**Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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18. The use of the Asset Management Plans minimises the risk of the Authority's major assets failing to support its overall aims, objectives and health and safety responsibilities and thus failing to support efficient and effective delivery of services to the community.

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**Environmental Implications**

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19. The environmental implications have been considered throughout the Asset Management Plans.

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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 use of the Asset Management Plans supports the Authority's priorities of supporting efficient and effective delivery of services to the people of Merseyside.

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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>M</b> erseyside <b>F</b> ire and <b>R</b> escue <b>A</b> uthority
<b>MFRS</b>	<b>M</b> erseyside <b>F</b> ire and <b>R</b> escue <b>S</b> ervice
<b>D&amp;T</b>	<b>D</b> ata and <b>T</b> echnology
<b>ICT</b>	<b>I</b> nformation and <b>C</b> ommunication <b>T</b> echnology
<b>CRMP</b>	<b>C</b> ommunity <b>R</b> isk <b>M</b> anagement <b>P</b> lan



# Property Asset Management Plan

2026/2031

# Contents

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# 1 Overview

## 1.1 Asset Management

This is our Property Asset Management Plan 2026/2031. It supersedes the 'Property Asset Management Plan 2025/2030, following our annual internal review.

The purpose of this Property Asset Management Plan is to provide clear guidance on the management of property assets, along with setting out guiding principles for our Property Asset Management Planning process.

Our property assets are important to the Authority's overall business as a base for operational staff, support staff, volunteers, and advocates along with being a fundamental and integral part of our community work. Our properties provide a hub for community integration allowing the community to approach the fire and rescue service and they provide a base for our community outreach work.

Effective asset management will provide assets that are sustainable, fit for purpose and provide value for money. To achieve this, we will

- Dispose of assets we no longer require
- Maintain, rationalise and develop the assets we keep
- Plan and acquire assets we require to meet operational needs

The plan outlines the asset management process and guiding principles used to ensure the assets meet the current and future needs of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority, our staff and the communities we serve. It details the current position regarding key assets and sets out the key capital priorities and budget requirements to achieve them.

Despite being in times of economic uncertainty, the Authority has invested in modernising its estate over the last 10 years. With the ongoing budget challenges, it remains vital for the Authority to implement best practice in the management of its land and buildings. It is anticipated that the proposals contained within this Plan can be implemented over the next five years improving and modernising our Property Assets where appropriate.

The Plan integrates fully with the Authority's business and financial planning processes, with clear alignment between the Asset Plan and other service plans. It reflects the Authority's Vision and takes cognisance of and should be read in conjunction with the current Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024/27.

## 1.2 Estates

The Estates Department are responsible for managing the Authority's property assets, with an estate currently comprising of approximately 54,600m<sup>2</sup> of managed space located over 48 acres of land in the Merseyside region, which has a population of some 1.4 million residents and spans 249 square miles (645km<sup>2</sup>). This incorporates 21 operational Fire and Rescue Stations and a further 10 non-operational support sites including a Marine Rescue Unit and 3 houses used by firefighters who work our Low Level of Activity and Risk (LLAR) duty system. The Authority also has three properties for sale, two old LLAR houses in Newton le Willows and an obsolete store on Richie Avenue, Aintree.

The department can be split into three key delivery areas

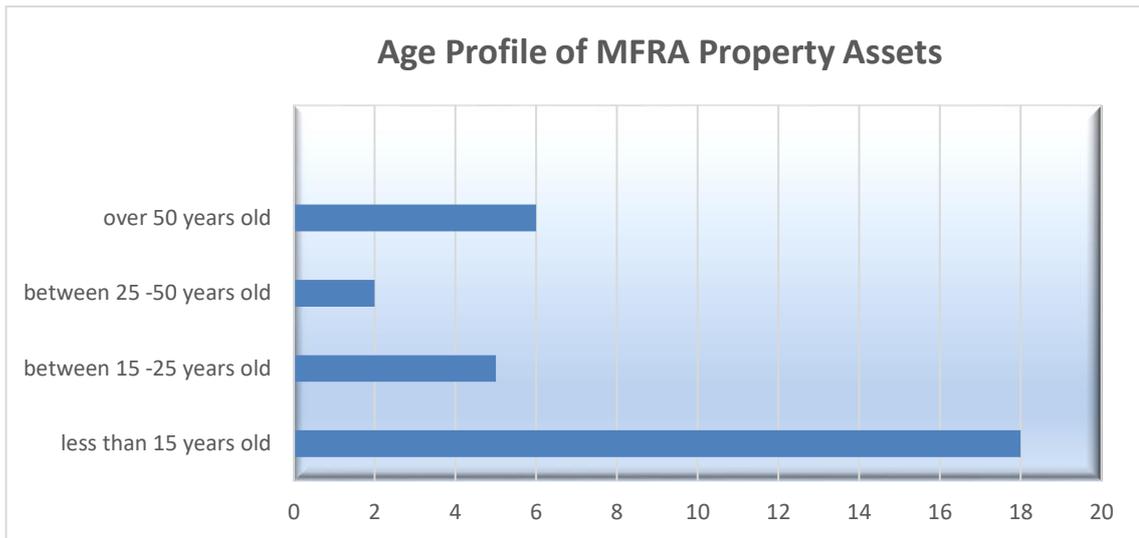
- Facilities Management – Equans (formerly known as Bouygues) were awarded a five-year contract to provide the facilities service provision in September 2022, covering the following service lines - cleaning, security, reactive and planned maintenance, Helpdesk, condition monitoring, waste, pest control, energy/environmental and statutory compliance.
- Project Management – project management of all major and minor capital build project are developed and managed within the department.
- Private Finance Initiative (PFI) – management of the 16 North West PFI fire stations built by Balfour Beatty (seven in Merseyside; four in Lancashire and five in Cumbria).

During the last ten years, there has been significant investment and changes to the Authority's property portfolio with the completion of:

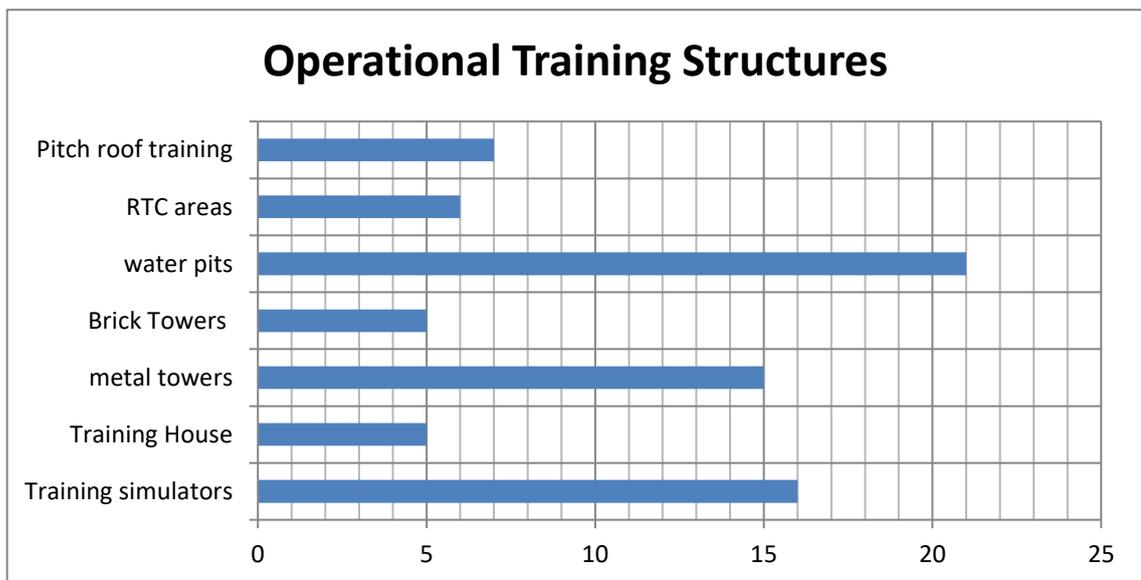
- Donation of land adjacent to Birkenhead Fire Station to Wirral Borough Council to allow the construction of a Youth Hub
- Emergency Stores – Vesty Road
- Prescott Community Fire and Police Station
- Saughall Massie Community Fire Station
- New St Helens Community Fire Station
- New Formby LLAR house
- Refurbishment of Heswall Community Fire Station
- New LLAR House in Newton Le Willows
- Refurbishment of Speke and Garston Community Fire Station
- Refurbishment of Old Swan Community Fire Station
- Construction of a new multi pump Aintree Community Station, Training and Development Academy and National Resilience Centre of Excellence
- Refurbishment of Bromborough Community Fire Station

As a result of these works, much of the estate has been refreshed or completely replaced during the last decade but there is still a mixture of buildings dating back to 1940's The historic nature of the older estate means that some of the properties

are old fashioned, lack community facilities and are unwelcoming to the local community. There is a high maintenance requirement associated with the older buildings, which are both oversized and environmentally inefficient, with a requirement to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 in relation to accessibility; this clearly provides a challenge for the Estates Department managing a high level of backlog maintenance, which also increases the levels of reactive works.



Within the property portfolio are operational structures used for training of operational staff. Given the extremes of their individual uses, many are short life assets, and all require regular safety checks and maintenance.



MFRA manages a number of National Resilience assets for national and regional incidents of large-scale nature; these assets require suitable storage and means to ensure they can be deployed quickly and effectively to any incident.

## 2 Property Aims & Objectives

The Property Asset Management Plan aims to deliver an efficient estate, which is fit for purpose to achieve the Authority's Vision; To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.

The Authority publishes a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) that sets out the ways in which it deals with local risks and challenges and improves services to the public. The CRMP updates stakeholders on the progress made against objectives and how it intends to deal with future challenges. The focus of the Asset Management Plan is determined by the CRMP and as such will be reviewed in line with the CRMP.

The Property Asset Management objectives are to ensure our property assets provide:

- Excellent facilities to meet operational response requirements
- Excellent facilities to support prevention and protection work in the community.
- Excellent facilities which are resilient and adaptable.
- Buildings which are fit for purpose and provide a healthy environment for all our employees and stakeholders
- Value for Money property solutions, maximising space utilisation by exploring opportunities for collaboration with partners and other similar authorities.
- Sustainable, environmental and energy considerate sites
- Safe sites, maintained in good condition, and compliant with current legislation
- Sites which are accessible to all and compliant with the Equality Act 2010.
- To achieve the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method 'BREEAM' standard of 'very good' for all new builds.

### 3 Review of Current Property Assets

Property assets are an important resource in delivering efficient and effective services to our community. A fundamental aspect of any Asset Management Plan is accurate information of the property portfolio.

Property information for each property is held within the Estates Department. This information and data is used to review and monitor our property performance on an annual basis. A snapshot of this data can be found in Appendix A – Summary of Property Assets

The facilities management contract awarded to Equans in September 2022 for a five-year contract. An asset condition survey was undertaken along with updating the computerised maintenance management system used to record and manage asset condition and life cycle costs.

The purpose of the asset condition survey is to provide verification and condition of all mechanical, electrical and building fabric assets which are maintained across the MFRA Estate. Each asset is then assigned a condition code and priority based on industry best practice.

All property, including premises and operational structures, is subject to inspection and examination regimes. These vary in frequency and content, by asset type to reflect their use, construction method, legal obligations and failure implications of the asset.

A property valuation report was completed in March 2024 which showed the property asset book value (land & buildings) to be £134.36m. This has decreased in line with depreciation, acquisitions, revaluations and disposals to a Book Value at March 2025 of £120m.

A number of Local Performance Indicators are monitored and reported monthly to manage the energy and environmental performance of our buildings.

- Carbon output of all buildings
- Electricity used by MFRA buildings divided by floor space
- Gas used by all MFRA buildings divided by floor space
- Water used by all MFRA buildings divided by floor space
- Waste generated per person per annum

Contract management of the facilities management contract and the PFI contract are fundamental to achieve effective asset management. Both contracts have a number of Key Performance Indicators linked to the Service Level Agreements which are reported and reviewed on a monthly basis.

## 4 Property Asset Management Strategy

The Estates Department manage MFRA assets effectively to help deliver against strategic priorities and services in line with the following key principles.

- Prioritise work based on the following weighting:
  - **Health and Safety** – Urgent work that will prevent immediate closure of the premises and/or address an immediate high risk to Health and Safety of the occupants and/or remedy a serious breach of the legislation
  - **Key Stations Methodology** – 10 key stations have been identified that form the basis of MFRA operational cover model for our control room. By ensuring all 10 stations have an appliance in their station ground, MFRA can meet its 10 minute response standard, on 90% of occasions
  - **Operational Requirements** – MFRA will continue to review its shift patterns and duty systems, in order to provide the most efficient and effective emergency response in Merseyside. The premises need to be flexible and fit for purpose for this service to be delivered.
- Explore opportunities for collaboration with partners, particularly other similar blue light authorities.
- Create community fire stations flexible enough to provide excellent facilities to:
  - Meet the support staff and community requirements.
  - Establish premises as Safe Havens
  - Be accessible for all
  - Enable the Authority to build on their previous success of reducing anti –social behaviour and arson in the community
- Develop buildings which are sustainable, environmental and energy considerate and deliver real cost efficiencies to meet the financial challenges placed on the Authority and their commitment to meet 'Net zero' by 2040.
- To provide a modern infrastructure and enable new ways of working to change the way we deliver services with our partners.
- To carry out ongoing review to provide properties which are fit for purpose, in a satisfactory condition, safe, accessible for all users and comply with relevant statutory requirements and financial reporting requirements.

The Estates Department has a robust reporting process to provide systematic and timely reporting of compliance and performance to enable prompt asset-related decision-making regarding estates assets.

In conjunction with the MFRA Procurement Department, both the PFI and FM contract, have robust contract management and reporting procedures in place to ensure effective delivery of asset maintenance.

A project database held within the Estates Department details the projects currently under consideration; those approved and those currently under development, see Appendix B - Summary of Key Property Projects.

## 5 Governance

The estates function is part of the Strategy and Performance Directorate (S&P). The S&P Board (Estates) oversees the development of land and property assets and delivery against the CRMP. The overall function of the Board is to enable the use of land and property assets to facilitate and drive transformation.

The Board is accountable for the successful development and delivery of the Estate programmes

The Board has responsibility for:

- Implementing the strategic direction for land and property set by MFRA in this asset management plan.
- supporting the duty to collaborate with partners in both development and estate disposal programmes.
- Considering bid submissions, defining and realising benefits, managing strategic risks, quality, budgets and timelines, making and resourcing decisions, taking account of environmental considerations and assessing requests for changes to the scope of the programme and any complementary initiatives.

The Board will consider the remit of the Estates Department (Head of Estates and any additional support including consultancy support), which has the primary purpose of managing programmes and individual projects (Programme) in line with the Board's direction.

The role of the Board is to oversee *Programme direction*:

- Agree the programme scope and any changes to scope during the course of the programme.
- Provide overall direction for the programme team and agree the scope for each stage of the programme.
- Report any major changes to programme deliverables or timescales to the S&P (Estates) Board or SLT as appropriate.
- Address and resolve matters arising during the programme lifecycle.

*In addition, Programme management:*

- Ensure that the required resources are committed for the programme team;
- Request the initiation of a major capital project via the Strategic Leadership Team ('SLT')
- Sign off each stage or exception plan of the programme,
- Authorise the closure of a project or programme.

*In addition, programme delivery:*

- Oversee the Authority's approach to managing assets.  
Including:
  - Ensuring that assets are managed in the most effective way to:
    - to drive forward growth;
- support the delivery of service transformation and unlock significant efficiency savings.
- Ensuring alignment with any devolution asks of government.
- Preparing local plans and partnerships to drive collaboration at the local level,
- Prepare, review and monitor the Service and Asset Management Plan for the Authority
- Sign off funding submissions.

*Funding:*

- Ensure financial administration of any programme is consistent with the terms and conditions required by the Authority / MHCLG and any other funders and by the authority's financial regulations;
- Seek to identify other opportunities for project funding

*Reporting:*

- Monitor and evaluate the process and outcomes and benefits from any programme;
- Ensure reporting of progress, outcomes and benefits achieved, as required to, SLT, MFRA, MHCLG, and other stakeholders;
- The S&P (Estates) Board may delegate its duties as it sees fit.

## **6 Property Asset Monitoring**

Effective Property Asset management requires a monitoring process to provide systematic and timely reporting of compliance and performance to enable prompt asset related decision making.

Monthly FM reports are produced on all MFRA properties to enable asset information, building performance and contractor's performance to be monitored and reviewed.

Information contained with the report includes:

- Health and Safety
- Energy consumption
- Reactive works
- Planned maintenance activities
- Lifecycle costs
- Statutory compliance

For premises and operational structures, environmental and other external factors have a significant impact on asset degradation. The constant heating and cooling cycle within training simulators is also a further major degradation aspect that must be considered. Each of these degradation effects can cause defects that may lead to a loss of stability or integrity. Action has to be taken to proactively monitor these assets and maintain and repair to ensure integrity is maintained. We manage asset degradation risk by a comprehensive inspection, programmed maintenance and renewal regime.

All property, including premises and operational structures, are subject to inspection and examination regimes. These vary, in frequency and content, by asset type to reflect their use, construction method, legal obligations and failure implications of asset.

- Structural inspection of training structures over a 5 year cycle
- Annual Inspection of Hot Fire Training Units
- 5 yearly fixed electrical inspections
- Annual portable appliance testing
- 5 yearly Mechanical & Electrical asset condition surveys
- 5 yearly detailed property/valuation condition surveys
- Annual fitness equipment inspections
- Statutory inspections with frequencies ranging from 1-5 years

A major asset failure report is produced and reviewed to establishing lessons learned and to feed back into the planning process, whenever a major property asset fails.

## 7 Property Asset Capital Spend Strategy

To manage the Property Asset investment process Estates department classifies spend into four main categories:

- Upgrade works
- Energy conservation works
- Major site refurbishments
- New build

These are explained in the following table:

### Property Assets Capital spend Matrix

	Spend	Why	Benefit
Upgrade works	Spend on the existing asset / Infrastructure  e.g. upgrade of external lighting, replacing of floor coverings	This spend stops the assets/Infrastructure failing or becoming out of date	More than just 'keeping' the lights on.  Ensure Assets and systems are robust, secure and resilient.
Energy Conservation Works	Projects that produce a reduction in energy costs.  Help reduce and meet the authority's carbon commitment including the use of LED lighting, installing Building management systems	This spend delivers value for money, innovation and savings where appropriate.	Accommodating change with a focus on a sound business case and clear deliverables
Major Site Refurbishment works	Spend on specific projects where the asset/premises is an enabler to change or becoming towards the end of its useful life.  e.g. refurbishment of 30 year old station,	This spend delivers the Authority's CRMP	To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK  Asset value increases
New Build	Spend on specific new build projects	This spend delivers the Authority's CRMP	Protecting public safety and increasing resilience.  New asset value

The 5-year Buildings capital budget for 2026 /2031 can be found in appendix C – but a summary is provided below.

A route map to deliver Net Zero carbon emissions was completed in 2022, a strategic working group is in place and action plan has been developed. The Estates Department is working with other departments to deliver the action plan.

In line with the Authority's commitment to achieving Net Zero by 2040, a review of alternative fuel vehicles has commenced, with a view to have the critical infrastructure in place before 2040.

Renewable energy in the form of Photo Voltaic panels (PV's) will be installed across the estate from 2026.

A full detailed access audit of all the Authority's properties was completed in 2021/22. A new Building Accessibility Reference Group was formed to consider the recommendations from the audit and provides ongoing support to the Estates team. All the actions have been prioritised and are being implemented within the current plans for building maintenance, refurbishment and replacement.

A major refurbishment of Kirkby fire station is due in 2026, which will include a full refurbishment of the building to create a modern facility, improve security, improve community facilities and have gender neutral study rooms and washing facilities. New roof with improved insulation, solar Photo Voltaic panels and new energy efficient windows. Demolition of the existing brick tower and install a new metal training tower creating more space for staff training, and parking. New mechanical and electrical installations, including air source heat pumps to allow the removal of natural gas to the site.

Liverpool city centre fire station: - A refurbishment of the ground floor accommodation to construct single gender-neutral study rooms and washing facilities.

Tower improvements: - This scheme is for the removal of old brick towers at Kirkby / Bromborough / Wallasey and Heswall and the installation of modern metal training towers. The redevelopment of the towers will commence as soon as practicable with the aim to complete the works within 18 – 28 months which is reflected within the building capital programme.

## Appendix A – Summary of Property Assets

FIRE STATIONS					
ID	Property	Details			
10	<b>Kirkdale</b> Studholme St Liverpool	Date Of Construction	2013	Total Floor Area (m2)	2042
		No of Appliance Bays	3	Total Site Area ( m2)	4411
11	<b>City Centre</b> St Annes St Liverpool	Date Of Construction	2006	Total Floor Area (m2)	1485
		No of Appliance Bays	4	Total Site Area ( m2)	2520
12	<b>Kensington</b> Beech St Liverpool	Date Of Construction	2010	Total Floor Area (m2)	814
		No of Appliance Bays	2	Total Site Area ( m2)	1011
14	<b>Speke and Garston</b> Cartwrights Farm Road	Date Of Construction	1999	Total Floor Area (m2)	1332
		No of Appliance Bays	3	Total Site Area ( m2)	4343
15	<b>Toxteth</b> Windsor St Liverpool	Date Of Construction	2013	Total Floor Area (m2)	787
		No of Appliance Bays	2	Total Site Area ( m2)	1000
16	<b>Old Swan</b> Queens Drive Liverpool	Date Of Construction	1999	Total Floor Area (m2)	1336
		No of Appliance Bays	3	Total Site Area ( m2)	6223
17	<b>Belle Vale</b> Childwall Valley Road	Date Of Construction	2013	Total Floor Area (m2)	1116
		No of Appliance Bays	2	Total Site Area ( m2)	3838
18	<b>Aintree</b> Long Lane	Date Of Construction	2024	Total Floor Area (m2)	1572
		No of Appliance Bays	12	Total Site Area ( m2)	6784
20	<b>Birkenhead</b> Exmouth St Liverpool	Date Of Construction	2013	Total Floor Area (m2)	1170
		No of Appliance Bays	3	Total Site Area ( m2)	3925
21	<b>Brombough</b> Dock Road, Wirral	Date Of Construction	1959	Total Floor Area (m2)	904
		No of Appliance Bays	3	Total Site Area ( m2)	3157
22	<b>Heswall</b> Telegraph Road, Wirral	Date Of Construction	1940	Total Floor Area (m2)	557
		No of Appliance Bays	3	Total Site Area ( m2)	1776
25	<b>Wallasey</b> Mill Lane Wirral	Date Of Construction	1973	Total Floor Area (m2)	1970
		No of Appliance Bays	6	Total Site Area ( m2)	4760
26	<b>Saughall Massie</b> saughall massie Road, Wirral	Date Of Construction	2019	Total Floor Area (m2)	748
		No of Appliance Bays	2	Total Site Area ( m2)	5058
30	<b>Bootle &amp; Netherton</b> Buckley Hill Bootle	Date Of Construction	2012	Total Floor Area (m2)	1435
		No of Appliance Bays	2	Total Site Area ( m2)	15594
31	<b>Crosby</b> Crosby Road North	Date Of Construction	1961	Total Floor Area (m2)	975
		No of Appliance Bays	3	Total Site Area ( m2)	3566
32	<b>Formby</b> Church Road Formby	Date Of Construction	2012	Total Floor Area (m2)	780
		No of Appliance Bays	2	Total Site Area ( m2)	2294
33	<b>Southport</b> Manchester Road	Date Of Construction	2013	Total Floor Area (m2)	1507
		No of Appliance Bays	5	Total Site Area ( m2)	3642
42	<b>Kirkby</b> Webster Drive Liverpool	Date Of Construction	1960	Total Floor Area (m2)	857
		No of Appliance Bays	2	Total Site Area ( m2)	4249
43	<b>Prescot</b> Manchester Road, Prescot	Date Of Construction	2018	Total Floor Area (m2)	1389
		No of Appliance Bays	3	Total Site Area ( m2)	7527
50	<b>St Helens</b> Violet way	Date Of Construction	2020	Total Floor Area (m2)	1137
		No of Appliance Bays	3	Total Site Area ( m2)	8100
51	<b>Newton Le Willows</b> Borron Road	Date Of Construction	2012	Total Floor Area (m2)	796
		No of Appliance Bays	2	Total Site Area ( m2)	2550

<b>Non Operational Sites</b>					
15	<b>Toxteth Fire Fit Hub</b> Windsor street	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	2013	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	3805 14378
71	<b>Service Headquarters</b> Bridle Road	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	1965	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	7457 29200
71	<b>Joint Control Centre</b> Bridle Road	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	2014	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	6097
TDA	<b>Training School TDA</b> Long Lane	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	2024	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	7581 43300
V1	<b>Vesty Unit 1</b> Vesty Business Park, Vest Road	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	2008	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	3282 8093
V5B	<b>Vesty Unit 5B</b> Vesty Business Park, Vest Road	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	2008	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	321 809
81	<b>Marine Fire 1</b> Pier Head, Liverpool	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	2012	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	199 n/a
17a	<b>Belle Vale LLAR</b> Chidwall Valley Road	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	2010	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	230
51c	<b>Newton Le Willows LLAR (New)</b> Silverdale Road, Newton Le Willows	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	2024	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	235 810
32b	<b>Formby New LLAR</b> 3a Cable street, Formby	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	2020	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	230 810
<b>Vacant property</b>					
51a	<b>Newton Le Willows LLAR</b> 26 silverdale Road, Newton le willows	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	1974	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	165
51b	<b>Newton Le Willows LLAR</b> 23 Borrton Road, Newton Le willows	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	1974	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	135
18a	<b>Old Stores</b> Richie Avenue	Date Of Construction No of Appliance Bays	1926	Total Floor Area (m2) Total Site Area ( m2)	240 0.2

Asset by Station	Quantity
Kirkdale	PFI
City Centre	665
Kensington	448
Speke & Garston	344
Toxteth	497
Old Swan	325
Belle Vale	PFI
Aintree	238
Birkenhead	PFI
Bromborough	308
Heswall	429
Wallasey	500
Bootle & Netherton	PFI
Crosby	365
Formby	PFI
Southport	PFI
Prescot	760
Saughall Massie	343
Kirkby	325
St Helens	575
Newton le Willows	PFI
SHQ /JCC	2139
TDA (new)	590
Vesty 1	552
Vesty 5b	177
Marine Fire 1	121
Formby LLAR	186
Newton Le Willows LLAR -	131
Belle Vale LLAR	135
Richie Avenue	n/a

## Appendix B – Summary of Key Property Projects

Location	Project	Project Status	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date
Kirkby	Major Refurbishment	Specification design stage	2025	2026
City Centre	Individual Gender-neutral facilities		Apr-25	
Crosby	Replacement of Storage area and appliance bay doors	Tender stage	2026/27	
Bromborough	Refurbishment of King's Trust area and improve training area	Planning stage	206/27	
Various	Replacement of older brick towers	Planning stage	2025	2028
All locations	Installation of Photo voltaic panels			
SHQ	Refurbishment of toilet areas	feasibility stage		
Wallasey	Major refurbishment	initial concept drawing	27/28	
All locations	Review of security – access control and CCTV provision	rolling programme of works	ongoing	2030/31
All Locations	Review of alternative fuelled vehicle- installation of EV charging points	Feasibility study	ongoing	Mar-40
MRU	Refurbishment of station	not started	2027/28	
Toxteth	Review of shared services in line with the end of grant conditions	not started	2027/28	
Museum (Heritage Centre)	refurbishment of museum	not started	2028/29	
SHQ	Refurbishment of office accommodation	not started	2029/30	

## Appendix C - 2026/2031 Build / Land Five Year Capital Programme

### Buildings Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
<b>Maior Site Works</b>						
BLD055 FS Refurbishment Bromborough	55,000	55,000				
BLD057 FS Refurbishment Crosby	81,000	81,000				
BLD063 FS Refurbishment Kirkby	1,800,000	1,800,000				
BLD073 SHQ Museum	191,000			191,000		
BLD087 FS Refurbishment City Centre	200,000	200,000				
BLD088 FS Refurbishment Kensington	100,000	100,000				
BLD089 FS Refurbishment Toxteth	152,500		152,500			
BLD090 FS Refurbishment Wallasey	1,500,000		1,500,000			
BLD093 Marine Fire 1 Refurbishment	138,300	20,000	118,300			
BLD098 SHQ Refurbishment	500,000				500,000	
	<b>4,717,800</b>	<b>2,256,000</b>	<b>1,770,800</b>	<b>191,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>	
<b>LLAR Accommodation Works</b>						
BLD075 LLAR Accommodation Newton-le-Willows	10,000	10,000				
	<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>				
<b>General Station Upgrade Works</b>						
BLD001 Roofs & Canopy Replacements	425,000	245,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
BLD003 Appliance Room Door Repairs	125,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD004 Concrete Yard Repairs	122,500	32,500	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500
BLD005 Tower Improvements	905,000	445,000	215,000	215,000	15,000	15,000
BLD013 Appliance Room Floors	188,500	68,500	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
BLD016 Community Station Investment	50,000	50,000				
BLD033 Sanitary Accommodation Refurbishment	200,000	120,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
	<b>2,016,000</b>	<b>986,000</b>	<b>357,500</b>	<b>357,500</b>	<b>157,500</b>	<b>157,500</b>

### Buildings Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
<b>Other Works</b>						
BLD007 LEV System in Appliance Rooms	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD011 Capital Refurbishment	115,000	15,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD014 Boiler Replacements	125,000	65,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
BLD018 Conference Facilities SHQ	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD020 5 Year Electrical Testing	145,000	45,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD026 Corporate Signage	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD032 Power Strategy (Generators)	85,000	25,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
BLD034 Office Accommodation	175,000	75,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD044 Asbestos Surveys	70,000	30,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
BLD053 Lighting Replacement	20,000					20,000
BLD058 HVAC - Heating, Ventilation & Air Con	150,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
BLD060 Equality Act/Access Compliance	500,000	300,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
BLD061 Lighting Conductors Surge Protectors	35,000	15,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD062 Emergency Lighting	50,000	30,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD067 Gym Equipment Replacement	145,000	45,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD068 SHQ JCC	10,000	10,000				
BLD070 Workshop Enhancement	70,000	70,000				
BLD094 Security Enhancement Works	135,000	35,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD095 Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Works	225,000	125,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
BLD096 Passive Strategy	125,000	45,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
BLD099 Photovoltaic Panels (Renewable Energy)	300,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
CON001 Energy Conservation Non-Salix	150,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
EQU002 White Goods & Catering Equipment	75,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
EQU003 Furniture Replacement Programme	125,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
	<b>2,905,000</b>	<b>1,105,000</b>	<b>445,000</b>	<b>445,000</b>	<b>445,000</b>	<b>465,000</b>
	<b>9,648,800</b>	<b>4,357,000</b>	<b>2,573,300</b>	<b>993,500</b>	<b>1,102,500</b>	<b>622,500</b>

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## Data & Technology - ICT Asset Management Plan

**2026/2031**

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# Data & Technology - ICT Asset Management Plan

## 1 Overview

### 1.1 Data and Technology (D&T) Department

The D&T Department is responsible for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) asset management. As a result, the Head of D&T, the D&T Service Delivery Team and the Applications & Technology (A&T) Team has the primary responsibility for ICT asset management.

A key element is to proactively manage the existing outsourced ICT managed service contract with its ICT partner, Telent. We work in partnership to ensure the maintenance of vital '999' emergency response infrastructure, as well as continuing to expand the use of ICT technology to manage our resources efficiently and effectively in line with the risks facing the communities of Merseyside and our firefighters and the organisational processes of the Authority.

### 1.2 Asset Ownership & Responsibilities

The Authority currently owns the ICT assets in the ICT infrastructure and the ICT applications that run on the ICT infrastructure. The ICT challenge is to provide the most secure, functional, flexible ICT infrastructure possible and to host the applications that deliver benefits to the Authority, all at the lowest cost of ownership. Meeting this challenge systematically through having the right people in the right structure, Infrastructure Lifecycle Management (ILM), Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) and best practices, such as the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), can lead to improvements in efficiency, performance, and cost management. ITIL is a set of best practices and processes for the management and delivery of ICT services and support.

ICT can be split into six key delivery area:

- The ICT infrastructure: data, voice and radio networks, personal computers (PCs) and devices, servers, printers, etc
- Commodity applications which run on the ICT infrastructure: Structured Query Language (SQL), Microsoft M365
- Fire Control applications which run on the ICT infrastructure: Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), MIS, MDT software
- Corporate applications that run on the ICT infrastructure: Transport management, Planning Intelligence and Performance System (PIPS), the intranet 'Portal' and operational risk information software
- Financial and HR applications which run on the ICT infrastructure
- The ICT Service Desk: The central point of contact between ICT providers and users on a day-to-day basis. It is also a focal point for reporting *incidents* (disruptions or potential disruptions in service availability or quality) and for users making *service requests* (routine requests for services)

ICT ILM and ALM is carried out by D&T and Telent on behalf of the Authority; it is done so in line with best practice from the ITIL framework.

The processes are mature, providing an infrastructure that is robust, secure, reliable and resilient, and applications that are secure, efficient and effective in meeting the needs of the organisation, and provide benefits to the communities of Merseyside.

Note, the Finance and People and Organisational Development (POD) Functions are directly responsible for their own applications, however, they are aligned to D&T governance.

### 1.3 ICT Asset Management

ICT asset management is carried out by the D&T department on behalf of the Authority and it is done so in line with ITIL and Information Technology Asset Management (ITAM). The terminology 'ITAM' is interchangeable with ICT Asset Management.

In line with the organisation's policy for asset management, the lifecycle of an ICT asset has four distinct phases:

- Planning
- Acquisition
- Operation
- Disposal

And ICT follows five major principles:

- ICT asset management decisions are integrated with the strategic planning process
- ICT asset planning decisions are based on an evaluation of the alternatives, which consider the 'lifecycle' costs, benefits and risks of ownership
- Accountability is established for ICT asset condition, use and performance
- Effective disposal decisions are carried out in line with minimal environment impact
- An effective control structure is established for ICT asset management

Further information on how D&T manages ICT assets on behalf of the Authority can be found in the remainder of this plan.

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## 2 ICT Asset Management Strategy

ITIL ITAM is the set of business practices that join financial, contractual and inventory functions to support lifecycle management and strategic decision-making for the ICT environment. ICT assets include all elements of software and hardware that are found in the organisation's environment.

Under ITAM, D&T manages its assets effectively to help deliver its strategic priorities and services in line with risk, providing value-for-money-services for the benefit of the local community.

D&T has all of its ICT assets recorded in a Configuration Management System (CMS) and the Definitive Media Library (DML). 'Remedy' records details of all the ICT assets and their age, thus enabling D&T to effectively manage the lifecycle of its infrastructure. It gives the ability to link ICT incidents, assets and people, to enable a more in-depth trend analysis to be performed around ITAM decisions.

D&T has a service catalogue, which outlines all the ICT services provided. Included in this catalogue are references to the capacity planning, security and preventative maintenance carried out on ICT assets.

D&T has a robust reporting process to provide systematic and timely reporting of compliance and performance, enabling prompt asset-related decision-making regarding ICT assets.

D&T has a service pipeline. The service pipeline comprises new ICT services under development, and these developments lead to new, or a change of use of, ICT assets (see [Section 5 D&T Service Pipeline](#) for further details).

To manage the ICT five-year capital asset investment plan, D&T classifies spend into four categories:

- Underlying Spend
- ICT Project Spend
- Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Project Spend (previously the Integrated Risk Management Plan)
- Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) National Project Spend

D&T has a five-year lifecycle-renewal policy for ICT hardware assets such as personal computers, devices and servers, at which point these assets will be considered end-of-life (EOL).

D&T has a 5-10-year lifecycle-renewal policy for ICT hardware assets such as network switches and telephony, at which point these assets will be considered EOL.

When an ICT asset is highlighted as EOL, its performance is assessed and, if required, a new asset will be purchased.

Adopting a best practice, asset management and configuration management solution allows D&T to understand:

- What ICT assets the Authority has
- Where they are located
- How well they are working
- How effectively they are supporting the business of the organisation

As a result, the following benefits have been realised:

- Accurate information on all ICT assets, providing D&T with the ability to deliver and support its services
- Trend analysis can be carried out against assets to aid incident and problem-solving
- Improved security through advanced ICT asset control
- Improved financial planning through clear identification of all assets and their associated relationships
- Improved software licence management, ensuring legal compliance
- Increased confidence in ICT systems and D&T services
- Increased customer satisfaction

A snapshot-in-time list of the Authority's hardware ICT assets can be found in [Appendix A – Summary of ICT Infrastructure Assets](#). This list can be requested and produced from Remedy to give a real-time view of the ICT asset holding. On a yearly basis, the list is produced for insurance calculation purposes.

The system is also used for various analytical tasks including:

- Identification of obsolete ICT assets, based on purchase date
- Identification of current and previous ICT asset owners
- ICT asset rationalisation
- Role Based Resourcing (RBR)

All ICT assets pass through a configuration management process where they are allocated and labelled with a unique asset reference number.

In line with ITIL, D&T has a DML to improve the way it tracks software and performs ALM.

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## 3 ICT Infrastructure Asset Monitoring Activities

D&T maintains an up-to-date service catalogue which outlines all the services provided. Included in this catalogue are references to capacity planning, security and preventative maintenance, all of which are examples of activities carried out on ICT assets.

### 3.1 Capacity Planning

*'Capacity planning is used to ensure that the Authority has adequate capacity to meet its demands, even during periods of extreme high usage and growth. This includes, but is not exclusive to, estimation of disk space, computer hardware, software and network infrastructure that will be required over a set amount of time.'*

Capacity is calculated in various ways depending on the system and specific requirements from D&T.

Regular storage reports are run on servers and file shares, which are used for current and projected growth estimations using bespoke software.

Additionally, network management software is utilised to manage the capacity of all network links used within the Authority's Wide Area Network (WAN) and Local Area Network (LAN).

### 3.2 Security

*'The Authority requires multiple levels of security on managed devices to defend against malicious behaviour and mitigate the risk to the Authority.'*

Patching is one of the most important parts of a cyber-security strategy; keeping things on the latest version, in most cases, means greater security.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) has a patching policy in place, and it applies to each area of the ICT infrastructure. Patching is conducted based on the assessment of risk. This policy is prudent, balancing the need to reduce the amount of downtime to critical systems with cyber-security risk.

The introduction of Microsoft System Centre Configuration Manger (SCCM) has seen patching carried out over and above Business as Usual (BAU) activity, because of the ability to automate tasks.

To assist in the automation of processes and administration of the status of both end point devices and servers, an ICT infrastructure discovery tool has been deployed to enable the ICT estate to be tightly managed and, importantly, easily reported on. This provides security by design, audit and assurance by highlighting hardware and software, if it is not fully patched and up to date, to allow MFRA to adhere to the required patching level defined by the Airwave Code of Connection (CoCo).

Email security and web content filtering is used to protect end-user devices from spam, viruses and other malicious threats via e-mail and internet. Endpoint Protection is used to

secure the Authority's systems – including, but not limited to, Windows servers, Windows desktops, Surface Pros and mobile devices – against viruses, malware, advanced threats and targeted attacks.

Mobile Device Management (MDM) for Samsung mobile phones is in place, along with appliance Toughpads, protecting our information.

The MDM provides a full suite of management and security tools for any device, covering the important capabilities of management, security, productivity and compliance.

Devices are encrypted up to 256 bits using Advanced Encryption Standard (AES).

### 3.3 Device Preventative Maintenance

*'Telent is responsible for device preventative maintenance, including planned maintenance activity designed to improve equipment life and avoid any unplanned maintenance activity.'*

The Authority requires desktops and laptops to be configured with Anti-Virus software and Windows updates via a Windows Server Update Services (WSUS) Server.

Windows critical updates are installed via the WSUS server, and recommended updates are reviewed and tested before installing on end-user devices.

SCCM has been introduced and is a systems management software product developed by Microsoft for maintaining large groups of computers.

Anti-virus software performs a full daily scan on each device and alerts via desktop and e-mail alerting if any issues are reported.

BIOS/firmware patching is performed when a device is re-imaged from the software library or if a specific fault occurs.

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## 4 ICT Infrastructure Asset Monitoring Reports

Effective ICT asset management requires a monitoring process to provide systematic and timely reporting of compliance and performance, to enable prompt asset-related decision-making. D&T prepares and publishes the following reports to fulfil this function:

### 4.1 Service Desk Performance Report – Monthly

The monthly ICT Service Desk Performance Report is provided to enable Telent, D&T and the Authority's officers to review the service delivery of ICT for the Authority and, if required, any escalation can be taken to the Strategy and Performance D&T Board.

### 4.2 ICT Infrastructure Usage Report – Monthly

The monthly ICT Infrastructure Usage Report is provided to enable Telent, D&T and the Authority's officers to review and discuss infrastructure usage, review the top 10 users of each asset and share the information with the Authority's budget holders.

### 4.3 Information Security Report – Monthly

The monthly Information Security Report provides Telent, D&T and the Authority's officers (including the Senior Information Risk Owner [SIRO]) with relevant information that supports the Authority's information security policy. It is posted on the Portal and is reviewed at the Protective Security Group (PSG) Meeting.

### 4.4 Problem Management Reports – Monthly

In line with ITIL service management processes, this report provides the statistical analysis and evidence that supports problem management.

Problem management seeks to proactively minimise incidents by identifying and recording problems and known errors within the ICT infrastructure. Errors within ICT infrastructure can cause repeated incidents, which have an adverse effect on the business. Identifying and removing errors can reduce the number of incidents over time.

### 4.5 Major Incident Management Reports – Ad Hoc

Whenever a major ICT Incident takes place, a Major Incident Management Report (MIR) is produced and reviewed with a view to establishing lessons learnt and to feed back into the ICT service catalogue.

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## 5 D&T Service Pipeline

The service pipeline comprises new D&T services under development, and these developments lead to new, or a change of use of, ICT assets. D&T has seven main areas associated with the service pipeline:

- ICT Service Requests
- D&T Cyber Security & Information Management
- D&T Continuous Service Improvement (CSI)
- Application & Technology Lifecycle Management
- D&T Strategic Framework
- Strategy and Performance D&T Board
- Other ITIL Standards

A list of key D&T projects can be found in [Section 8 Digital Transformation Strategy](#) and [Appendix B – Key D&T Projects and Activities](#).

### 5.1 ICT Service Requests

The ICT Service Desk Digital Workplace allows users to report issues and incidents as well as requesting simple technical changes, information, enquiries or hardware and software changes, e.g. mobile phones.

For certain ICT requests, an approval route through the D&T Service Delivery Manager is needed. The ICT request process is fully integrated in the CMS, with all changes being documented.

### 5.2 D&T Cyber Security & Information Management

Reporting to the Head of Data & Technology; the Cyber Security & Information Management Manager will coordinate the Service's approach to cyber-security, business intelligence and information management and governance. The role will develop the Service's strategy for cyber-security: advising on the suitability of the design; tools; activities; control measures and processes, required to mitigate cyber-security risks in relation to the Service's applications and technology technical architecture (current and proposed).

### 5.3 D&T Continuous Service Improvement (CSI)

The purpose of the D&T CSI meeting is to ensure that cost-justifiable ICT capacity in all areas of ICT exists and is matched to the current and future agreed needs of the business in a timely manner. A key focus is on increasing the efficiency, maximising the effectiveness, and optimising the cost of services and the underlying ICT service management. Meetings follow a six-week cycle, and the process is documented in the CSI register. This CSI process is now firmly embedded in the D&T department, and the key benefits are:

- Clarity of ownership
- Clarity of requirements
- Clarity and management of costs

- Visibility and tracking progress
- Forward planning
- Resource scheduling
- Identifying duplicate effort across the Authority's departments and/or stations
- The ability to utilise information from archives

## 5.4 Lifecycle Management

The D&T challenge is to provide the most functional, flexible ICT infrastructure possible and to host the applications that deliver benefits to the organisation, all at the lowest cost of ownership. Meeting this challenge systematically through having the right people in the right structure, ILM, ALM and best practices such as ITIL can lead to improvements in efficiency, performance and cost management.

### 5.4.1 ILM

ILM encompasses the planning, design, acquisition, implementation and management of all the elements comprising the ICT infrastructure.

### 5.4.2 ALM

ALM encompasses the planning, design, acquisition, implementation and management of all the elements comprising the application portfolios.

### 5.4.3 ITIL

ITIL is a globally accepted approach and set of practices for IT Service Management (ITSM) that focuses on aligning ICT services with the needs of the business.

## 5.5 D&T Strategic Framework

The D&T Strategic Framework is a cycle of four meetings that takes place on an annual basis and the output feeds into the quarterly S&P D&T Board.

The D&T Strategic Framework is part of the governance applied to the delivery of the Telent ICT managed service; meetings are held once a quarter to cover one of three topics. There are two 'Innovation and Technology Forums', an 'Efficiency and Value for Money Meeting' and a 'Strategy and Alignment Meeting' held each year.

The D&T Strategic Framework ensures that the ICT managed services contract:

- Is working effectively
- Has its strategic goals set by, and aligned with, the needs of the Authority
- Improves efficiency of arrangements and delivers mutually beneficial savings and efficiencies

## 5.6 Strategy and Performance (S&P) D&T Board

There are three thematic S&P boards in place: D&T, Estates, and Performance, which means a thematic S&P D&T Board meets every three months. The purpose of the S&P D&T Board is to ensure that all data and technology services are aligned to ensure the mission and objectives of the Authority are delivered as effectively as possible.

## 5.7 Other ITIL Standards

- A Change Advisory Board (CAB) has been set up which will ensure that only authorised changes are deployed to the Authority's infrastructure. This will also improve the communication between key system owners and D&T
- D&T maintains and develops a DML. It ensures that:
  - A secure compound is established in which master copies of all authorised versions of the organisation's software are stored and protected
  - All documents pertaining to applications are stored in a central location, e.g. number of users, location of users, contact details of suppliers and Service Level Agreements (SLAs)
- D&T sets minimum release management standards which third party suppliers are expected and contracted to reach

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## 6 D&T Infrastructure Asset Replacement Policy

D&T has in place procedures to trace the acquisition, deployment, management and disposal of ICT assets under its control.

Some of the primary goals for asset replacement are:

- To develop an appropriate type of replacement mix based on each asset and its behaviour
- To ensure value for money
- To meet the desired/acceptable level of risk
- To enable realistic forecasts of future events

### 6.1 ICT Asset Purchasing

In the main, the Authority owns the ICT assets. When ICT assets are purchased by D&T, the following applies:

- For small quantities of ICT commodity assets, the Authority will purchase
- For large quantities of ICT commodity assets, the Authority's ICT outsourced partner will specify requirements, but the Authority's procurement team will identify the best route to market and the Authority will purchase
- Where the contract permits for ICT assets which require complex installation service or if priority support is required; the Authority's outsourced partner specifies and purchases the item on the Authority's behalf and then the Authority pays via change control

## 6.2 ICT Asset Disposal

D&T has in place procedures for the disposal of ICT assets via a company called 'Computer Waste'. Computer Waste is an Authorised Treatment Facility (ATF), fully registered by the Environment Agency (EA). The company specialises in the recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment (see WEEE).

- All ICT assets disposed of with Computer Waste are recorded on a waste transfer note that is signed and presented to the Authority for audit purposes
- Hard drives are destroyed on the Authority premises, witnessed by an employee of Telent, and an accompanying destruction certificate is presented to the Authority for audit purposes

## 6.3 ICT Hardware Assets

D&T has a five-year lifecycle-renewal policy for ICT hardware assets such as PCs, tablets, mobile devices and servers, at which point ICT Assets will be considered end-of-life, if there are confirmed performance issues. A three-year equipment life was considered but the increased capital spend was deemed to be excessive.

Furthermore, the proliferation of devices along the wide spectrum of ICT presents opportunities and challenges to D&T, as well as budget challenges to the organisation. There is a policy of using shared MFDs and having one MFD per function, to replace printers. This printer rationalisation has contributed to budget savings.

RBR is undertaken by D&T, evaluating the agile provision of ICT equipment at stations, SHQ, Training and Development Academy (TDA), Vesty One (vehicle workshops) and 'incidents', based on the roles of the staff located there.

An Asset Based Resourcing (ABR) initiative is also in place as a check and balance to RBR, ensuring operational vehicle assets match the role of firefighters and senior officers who use such vehicles.

D&T has a 5–10-year lifecycle-renewal policy for ICT hardware assets such as network switches and telephony, at which point ICT assets will be considered end-of-life if there are confirmed performance issues.

ICT assets could also be replaced on an ad-hoc basis, but this would lead to difficult budget forecasting, with some years seeing larger budget increases than others. If, however, ITIL problem management analysis identifies an ICT hardware asset that is repeatedly problematic, causing a break in service, the equipment would be considered for replacement before its five-year equipment life had expired.

## 6.4 ICT Asset Movements 2025/2026

Key ICT asset movements to highlight in 2025/2026. Note: these are activities, over and above those in Section Seven - Fire Control Applications and Hardware Assets of this report.

### **SIP system for Primary Fire Control**

In Jan 2027 the last elements of Openreach's analogue and digital ISDN copper network will be turned off as an all-IP network replaces these legacy services. Design work has been completed with final switch over in Q1 2026.

### **Enhanced Mobilisation**

A project that adds additional functionality to the Fire Control CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) solution and will alert a crew earlier and put them on standby to attend an incident, making the response faster than it is currently.

### **MAIT (Multi Agency Incident Transfer)**

Implementation of MAIT which now allows Fire Control to share electronic incident records with other Fire & Rescue Services.

### **AURA (Dynamic Cover Tool)**

Internal development of AURA providing a geographical display of availability of appliances; highlighting areas of under- and over- resourcing.

### **New Server Virtualisation and Backup**

New Server virtualisation and backup solution is in place together with upgraded corporate SQL server environment.

### **Migration of Operational Risk Information**

Development and implementation of a new solution to capture operational risk information.

### **Water Management System**

Implementation of a new water management solution.

### **SharePoint Online Migration**

Migration of content from on-premises SharePoint, and development of new Power Apps to replace legacy InfoPath forms.

### **Mobile Device Management Replacement**

Migration from legacy MDM solution to new consolidated security suite including the replacement of 300 mobile devices.

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## 7 Fire Control Applications and Hardware Assets

Reporting to the Head of Data & Technology, the Applications & Technology Manager works with the Authority's outsourced ICT partner to carry out appropriate lifecycle management to ensure successful ICT service delivery in line with SLAs. Activities include:

- Following of best practice ICT asset management
- Application or infrastructure replacement or refresh
- Spare holding to replace faulty equipment, which is one method in ensuring SLAs are met
- Application Life Cycle Management
- Year-on-year preventative maintenance in mid-October prior to the bonfire period. This is done for both Primary and Secondary Fire Control infrastructure and applications
- Regular relocation exercises to Secondary Fire Control

### 7.1 Six High Level Areas of ICT in Fire Control.

There are six high level areas of ICT in Fire Control.

- **Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)** - This is where incoming emergency calls are logged, and the appropriate resources mobilised to the incidents.
- **Management Information System (MIS):** providing senior officers with real time incident information and the organisation with incident history for trend analysis.
- **An Integrated Communications Control System (ICCS)** - an ICCS is found at the centre of modern-day control rooms. All communications that go into the control room such as 999 and administration telephony calls, radio communication and CCTV are routed via the ICCS. The control room staff can then manage these various communication channels from one place on their desktop by accessing the ICCS.

An ICCS works in tandem with a CAD application. The ICCS is the place where incoming emergency calls are answered, and the CAD is where the calls are logged, and resources dispatched.

- **Wide Area Radio Scheme:** Emergency services rely on seamless radio communications coverage to effectively perform their daily tasks. MFRA, in keeping with the Police and Ambulance, use Airwave.

*NOTE: The Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme, (ESMCP) set up by the Home Office, aims to replace the current communication service provided by*

*Airwave. The new service will be delivered across the Emergency Services Network (ESN) and MFRA will connect to this network via a Direct Network Service Provider (DNSP).*

- **Data Mobilisation:** Fire Control can mobilise crews to incidents by sending a message to the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) installed in the appliance.
- **Station-End Turnout:** Various hardware and software components and subsystems are installed in every MFRS community fire station. The solution involves automatically unlocking doors; switching on of lights; sounding the alarm and printing the emergency turnout information on the fire station printer. This enables crews to respond to emergency turnouts in a safe and efficient manner.

## 7.2 Fire Control ICT Project Review

In 2026/27 work will commence to plan a full review of the above six areas of ICT in Fire Control. All hardware, software and support arrangements will be considered and decisions taken on whether to extend, upgrade or replace each element.

## 7.3 Emergency Services Network (ESN)

The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) aims to deliver an Emergency Services Network (ESN) which will replace the existing Airwave communications network used by the police, fire and rescue, and ambulance services in the UK.

IBM is now the prime contractor for the ESN, delivering 'User Services' which includes the Mission Critical Push to Talk service.

EE has had its 'Mobile Services' contract extended, which now includes the installation of 2000 generators in the most suitable locations across the country in the event of a national power outage.

Samsung's Mission Critical application has successfully completed push-to-talk and push-to-video calls, confirming operational emergency communications functionality.

The strategy for a National Deployment Plan has been established which has three stages – preparation, mobilisation and transition. Within the preparation stage, MFRS readiness assessment activity will start in February 2026, with national transition delivering ESN by Q4 2029.

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## 8 Digital Transformation Strategy

### Our Digital Transformation Vision:

To deliver a more efficient and effective fire and rescue service by leveraging digital technologies that enhance operational capabilities, improve decision-making, optimize resource deployment, and connect the workforce.

### Digital Transformation Projects 2026/27:

- Support the implementation of the second phase of the Government's Fire and Rescue Data Platform (FaRDaP).
- Support the upgrade/replacement of MFRS applications:
  - Health and Safety management
  - Fleet Management
  - Mobile Data Terminal software
- Review the market and consider the most appropriate Incident Command Solution for implementation.
- Develop an application to assist with the management of information requests.
- Develop further enhancements of the National Resilience application, together with the requirements from the ND2 project.
- Continue to develop the Service's approach to the use and governance of AI technologies.

## 9 ICT Commodity Application Software

D&T is responsible for ensuring the Authority has an ALM strategy for all its commodity applications. D&T works closely with all departments to develop and manage organisational commodity applications and agree and monitor SLAs.

### 9.1 Microsoft Software: Enterprise Agreement (EA)

The Authority's strategic direction is to use Microsoft products.

To continue to use the latest versions of Microsoft products, such as Window Server, Windows 11 and M365, MFRA has a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA) for the majority of its Microsoft software licences.

Under the EA, Microsoft has bundled together Windows, Office 365 and a variety of management tools to create a subscription suite: Microsoft 365 (M365). MFRA is licensed for M365 and this has allowed D&T to deploy Microsoft Teams together with other M365 products.

### 9.2 Anti-Virus and E-mail Filtering

The anti-virus software protects the Authority from computer viruses and any other threats which may try to enter the Authority's network.

The e-mail filtering system is used to filter e-mail and quarantine non-legitimate e-mails via the process of word detection. The words that result in the email being quarantined are recorded in a database and analysed on a monthly basis.

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## 10 Corporate and Financial Application Software

### 10.1 Application Classification

Applications are managed through their lifecycle in collaboration with application owners and are given a classification to identify their status. The classifications include:

New	Conceived, in planning phase, under construction or newly deployed
Emerging	In production or licences have been purchased, but in limited use, such as a pilot
Mainstream	In production and actively being used
Containment	In production for a specific or limited purpose
Sunset	In production with scheduled retirement in progress
Prohibited	No longer used

See [Appendix D – Application Status](#) for a full list of applications.

### 10.2 Application Requests

Any department with a requirement for a new or replacement application must, in the first instance, complete the Application Request Form. The form can be accessed from the S&P homepage on the Portal. The form captures the following information:

- Identified application sponsor and owner
- Organisational need/value
- Risks to the organisation
- Legislative requirements
- Potential efficiency savings
- Collaboration considerations
- Budget allocated for this application

If the application request is approved for progression to the next stage, a further business case is required, detailing the market engagement carried out, cost benefit analysis and recommendations.

### 10.3 Application Gateway Team

The purpose of the Application Gateway Team is to provide the Authority with effective governance arrangements for new or replacement applications. The Application Gateway Team is responsible for approving and prioritising the advancement of new or replacement applications within the organisation.

## 10.4 Application Development

### 10.4.1 Application Toolkit

The Application Development Team utilises a suite of products that assists with the development of internal applications:

Azure DevOps	Azure DevOps is a Microsoft product that provides version control, reporting, requirements management, project management, automated builds, lab management, testing and release management capabilities. It covers the entire application lifecycle and enables DevOps capabilities.
Azure IaaS	Infrastructure as a service (IaaS) provides a secure and scalable infrastructure.
Azure SaaS	Software as a service (SaaS) allows users to connect to and use cloud-based apps over the Internet.
Visual Studio	Microsoft Visual Studio is an integrated development environment. It is used to develop computer programs, as well as websites, web apps, web services and mobile apps.

### 10.4.2 DevOps

DevOps is the union of people, processes and products to enable continuous delivery of value to our end users. The combination of 'Dev' and 'Ops' refers to avoiding siloed 'Development' and 'Operations' by using multidisciplinary teams that work together with shared and efficient practices and tools. DevOps has been adopted as a recognised framework to ensure the success of any app development and to align developed apps and infrastructure; Dev being the Application Development Team, Ops being ICT, both of which are part of the D&T department.

### 10.4.3 Development Portfolio

The application development portfolio currently consists of the following applications.

Application	Classification
OPS (Operational Performance System)	Prohibited
SSRI Progress	Prohibited
National Resilience Application	Mainstream
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Website	Mainstream
AURA	Mainstream

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## 11 ICT Asset Capital Spend Strategy

### 11.1 ICT Asset Investment Process

To manage the ICT asset investment process, D&T classifies spend into four categories:

- Underlying Spend
- ICT Project Spend
- CRMP Project Spend
- National FRS Project Spend

These are explained in the following table:

	Spend	Why	Benefit
Underlying Spend	Spend on the existing ICT infrastructure including software, devices, servers, networks and voice communication e.g. upgrade of station switches.	This spend stops the ICT infrastructure and any software becoming out of date.	More than just 'keeping the lights on'.  An ICT-enabled organisation whose systems are robust, secure and resilient, with the ability to accommodate change.
ICT Project Spend	Projects that: deliver Authority changes, deliver step changes in technology e.g. MDT evolution.	This spend delivers value for money, innovation and savings, where appropriate.	ICT accommodating change with a focus on a sound business case and clear deliverables.
CRMP Project Spend	Spend on specific CRMP projects where ICT is a major enabler e.g. station change.	This spend delivers the Authority's CRMP.	To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK. One team, putting its communities first. Releasing budget for frontline resources.
National FRS Project Spend	Spend on specific national projects where ICT is a major enabler e.g. ESMCP.	Spend to align the Authority's systems to national initiatives.	Protecting public safety and increasing national resilience.

The 2026/2031 Five-Year Capital Plan can be found in [Appendix C – 2026-2031 ICT Five Year Capital Plan](#)

## 11.2 Review of the Current Capital Programme

D&T carries out an annual full review of its capital budget. The basis for the review is to:

- Determine if any reductions in planned spend is possible, and/or
- Determine if the asset life could be reviewed (extended) to reduce the frequency of replacing assets etc. and/or
- Determine if anything else could be done to reduce the level of planned borrowing and therefore reduce the impact of debt servicing costs on the future revenue budget.

This asset management plan has been updated to reflect this review.

## 11.3 Cloud Strategy

The D&T cloud strategy is to:

- Continue to develop cloud-based solutions to transform existing and future processes to meet business needs, achieving high levels of resilience and availability.
- Continue to move to cloud-based solutions for new and replacement software applications where organisational benefits can be realised.
- Explore the public and hybrid cloud to deliver dynamically automated ICT infrastructure management.

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## 12 Glossary

ABR	Asset Based Resourcing
AES	Advanced Encryption Standard
ALM	Application Lifecycle Management
AP	Assurance Partner
ATF	Authorised Treatment Facility
AV	Audio visual
BAU	Business as Usual
BIOS	Basic Input/Output System
CAB	Change Advisory Board
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CCN	Change Control Note
CCS	Crown Commercial Service
CMS	Configuration Management System
CoCo	Code of Connection
CRMP	Community Risk Management Plan
CSI	Continuous Service Improvement
D&T	Data & Technology
DCS	Dispatch Communications Server
DML	Definitive Media Library (previously Definitive Software Library, DSL)
DNSP	Direct Network Service Provider
DPA	Data Protection Act
DTA	Digital Transformation Arrangement
ED&I	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EA	Enterprise Agreement
EOL	End-of-life
ESMCP	Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme
ESN	Emergency Services Network
FDS	Functional Design Specification
FRS	Fire and Rescue Service
GPS	Global Positioning System
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IAAS	Infrastructure as a Service
ICCS	Integrated Communications Control System
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILM	Infrastructure Lifecycle Management
IM	Information Management
ITAM	IT (or ICT) Asset Management
ITIL	Information Technology Infrastructure Library
ITSM	IT Service Management
LAN	Local Area Network
LSP	Licensing Solution Partner
MDM	Mobile Device Management
MDT	Mobile Data Terminal
MFD	Multi-Function Device

MFRA	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
MIR	Major Incident Report
MIS	Management Information System
OPS	Operational Performance System
PC	Personal Computer
PIPS	Planning Intelligence and Performance System
PM	Project Manager
PSG	Protective Security Group
RAP	Remedial Action Plan
RBR	Role Based Resourcing
S&P	Strategy and Performance
SAAS	Software as a Service
SAN	Storage Area Network
SCCM	System Centre Configuration Manager
SIEM	Security Information and Event Management
SIRO	Senior Information Risk Owner
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMS	Service Management System
SQL	Structured Query Language
TDA	Training and Development Academy
WAN	Wide Area Network
WEEE	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment
WSUS	Windows Server Update Service

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## Appendix A – Summary of ICT Infrastructure Assets

Fire Control Services and Infrastructure	Quantity
CAD Servers – Tier 1 (≤£5000)	19
CAD Desktops	34
CAD Monitors	28
ICCS Servers	6
ICCS Storage (HADS)	1
ICCS Clients	24
ICCS Touchscreen	24
Fire Control Headsets	40
Alerter Masts	7
Station End Firecoders	26
Station End Turnout Printers	30
Station End Auxiliary Relay Unit (ARU)	30
Station End Amplifiers	33
Station End UPS	37
Modems	61
Mobile Data Terminals	61
Airwave Radio SAN A	112
Airwave Radio SAN B	10
Airwave Radio SAN J	81
Media Wall Solution	1
Cradlepoint Solution	26

Administration Infrastructure, Managed Servers & Desktop	Quantity
Servers – Tier 1 (≤£5000)	41
Servers – Tier 2 (≥£5000)	3
VM Server Infrastructure (dHCI)	1
HPE Modular Storage Arrays (MSA)	3
HPE Storage Shelves	8
HPE Tape Library	2
Desktops	311
Laptops	17
Microsoft Surface Pro	374
Microsoft Surface Laptop	130
Microsoft Surface Book	13
Microsoft Surface Go	15
Panasonic Toughpads	98
Docking Stations (Laptops & Surface Devices)	636
Docking Stations (Toughpads)	173
Monitors	1159

Non-Standard Printers (not Apogee devices)	7
Multi-Function Devices	52
Desktop Print Devices	12
Security Appliance – Tier 1 (≤£2000)	6
Security Appliance – Tier 2 (≥£2000)	8
Router – Tier 1 (≤£2000)	24
Router – Tier 2 (≥£2000)	2
Switch – Tier 1 (≤£2000)	65
Switch – Tier 2 (≥£2000)	14
Wireless Controller	2
Wireless Access Points	140
Mitel IP Sets	683
SIKLU Radio Link	8

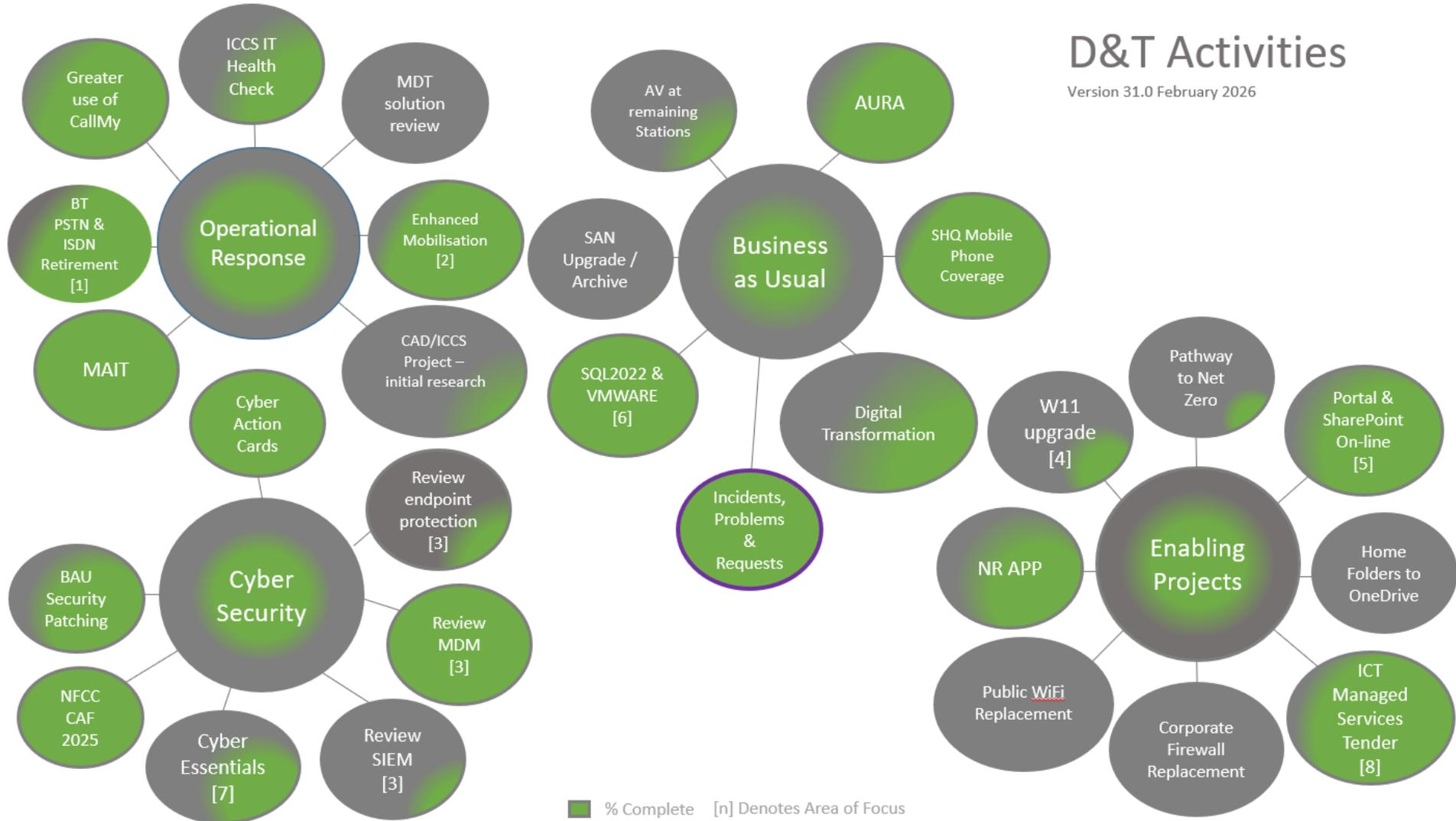
Miscellaneous	Quantity
Smartphones (Samsung)	329
iPhones	24
Non-Smartphones (Alcatel/Nokia)	364
iPads	4
Encrypted USB devices	141
Projectors (includes Smartboards)	21
Barco Click Share	53
Professional Displays	21
Clevertouch Screen	32
IPTV - Gateways	1
IPTV - Receivers	42
Remote Access Tokens	169
Running Call Phones	23

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Appendix B – Key D&T Projects and Activities

# D&T Activities

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## Appendix C – 2026/27 to 2030/31 ICT Five Year Capital Plan

### ICT Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
<b>IT002 ICT Software</b>						
Software Licences	10,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
MDT Software Solution Refresh	175,000	100,000				75,000
Security Info & Event Management Software	494,000	100,000	98,500	98,500	98,500	98,500
3 Yr Firewall	10,000			10,000		
3 Year PRTG Subscription License	15,000			15,000		
3 Year Mitel Software Upgrade	20,000		10,000			10,000
Threat Defence License	57,000	17,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Microsoft EA Agreement (Enterprise Products)	1,277,000	251,000	256,500	256,500	256,500	256,500
Microsoft EA Agreement (E5 Security)	423,000	85,000	84,500	84,500	84,500	84,500
Microsoft EA Agreement (Subscription Products)	32,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
Microsoft EA Agreement (Additional Products)	62,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500
	<b>2,576,000</b>	<b>574,000</b>	<b>480,500</b>	<b>495,500</b>	<b>470,500</b>	<b>555,500</b>
<b>IT003 ICT Hardware</b>						
Desktops (target 20%)	240,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
Laptops/Surface Pros/Tablets/Docking Stns (target 20%)	602,500	120,500	120,500	120,500	120,500	120,500
Monitors & Monitor Arms (target 20%)	70,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
Peripherals replacement (target 20%)	15,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Mobile device replacement (target 20%)	62,000	12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400
Windows 11 Hardware Upgrade	100,000				100,000	
Fire Control & OSR AV Refresh	60,500				60,500	
SHQ Conf AV Refresh	215,000				215,000	
TDA Conf AV Refresh	250,000				250,000	
Station AV Refresh	150,000				150,000	
SHQ Offices & TDA AV 5-year refresh	100,000					100,000
Backup Tape Drive 5-year asset refresh	25,000		25,000			
IPTV 5-year asset refresh	36,800		36,800			
	<b>1,926,800</b>	<b>197,900</b>	<b>259,700</b>	<b>197,900</b>	<b>973,400</b>	<b>297,900</b>
<b>IT005 ICT Servers</b>						
Server/storage replacement (target 20%)	325,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000
Server/storage growth	70,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
Mitel Server Upgrade Corporate Telephony	150,000	150,000				
Virtulisation 5 Year Refresh	450,000				450,000	
SAN 5 Year Refresh	195,000	195,000				
	<b>1,190,000</b>	<b>424,000</b>	<b>79,000</b>	<b>79,000</b>	<b>529,000</b>	<b>79,000</b>
<b>IT018 ICT Network</b>						
Network Switches/Router replacement	10,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Network Switches/Routers Growth	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Network Data Port Replacement	50,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Mitel IP Telephony Upgrade (inc.Fire Control)	140,000			140,000		
MDT Wireless Network Replacement	50,000	50,000				
Public Wi-Fi Replacement	15,000					15,000
5 Year Core Network Switch/Router upgrade	600,000				600,000	
5 Year Secondary Fire Control backup Tel/Inf refresh	30,000				30,000	
5 Year Wireless Access Points and Wireless Controllers	150,000				150,000	
5 Year PSTN replacement asset refresh	275,000	125,000			150,000	
	<b>1,345,000</b>	<b>192,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>157,000</b>	<b>947,000</b>	<b>32,000</b>

## Appendix C – 2026/27 to 2030/31 ICT Five Year Capital Plan – Continued

### ICT Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	2030/31 £
<b>IT026 ICT Operational Equipment</b>						
Station Equipment Replacement	50,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Crosby Refurbishment	10,000	10,000				
Kirkby Refurbishment	35,000	35,000				
MF1 Refurbishment	10,000		10,000			
Toxteth Refurbishment	10,000		10,000			
Wallasey Refurbishment	35,000		35,000			
SHQ Refurbishment	30,000				30,000	
5 Yearly Station UPS Replacement	70,000					70,000
LRAD/MLS Replacement	70,000					70,000
GPS Repeater 5-year asset refresh	55,000		55,000			
Toughpad Asset Refresh - Vehicles	150,000	150,000				
Station End Network Equipment Asset Refresh	140,000	140,000				
ICU existing hardware 5-year asset refresh	20,000	20,000				
MDT (Screen & CPU) Front Line Vehicles asset refresh	210,000	210,000				
	<b>895,000</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>
<b>IT027 ICT Security</b>						
Remote Access Security FOBS	10,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Celestix 3-year renewal - VPN tokens	60,000	30,000			30,000	
Replacement of PfSense Firewalls	100,000					100,000
	<b>170,000</b>	<b>32,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>32,000</b>	<b>102,000</b>
<b>IT058 New Emergency Services Network (ESN)</b>						
ESN Radios / Infrastructure	54,300	54,300				
	<b>54,300</b>	<b>54,300</b>				
<b>IT063 Planning Intelligence and Performance System</b>						
PIPS System upgrade	120,000				120,000	
	<b>120,000</b>				<b>120,000</b>	
<b>Other IT Schemes</b>						
IT030 ICT Projects/Upgrades	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
IT033 Incident Ground Management Software	50,000	50,000				
IT055 Fire Control ICT (Non Vision)	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
IT059 ESMCP Project Control Room Integration	66,100	66,100				
IT062 Capita Vision 5 Update - ICCS ITHC	50,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
IT066 ESN Ready	20,700	20,700				
IT067 DCS Upgrade	226,000				226,000	
IT068 TDA Command & Control Suite	350,000				350,000	
IT070 H&S Application Renewal/Replacement	50,000	50,000				
IT073 CAD Replacement	2,000,000			2,000,000		
	<b>2,862,800</b>	<b>206,800</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>2,020,000</b>	<b>596,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>
	<b>11,139,900</b>	<b>2,256,000</b>	<b>978,200</b>	<b>2,961,400</b>	<b>3,707,900</b>	<b>1,236,400</b>

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## Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority - Applications Status Update

### ITIL Standards

New	Conceived, in planning phase, under construction or newly deployed
Emerging	In production or licenses have been purchased, but in limited use, such as a pilot
Mainstream	In production and actively being used
Containment	In production for a specific or limited purpose
Sunset	In production with scheduled retirement in progress
Prohibited	No longer used`

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Application Function	Status
Database used by IIT to record and report on data relating to incident investigations.	Mainstream
Financial reporting tool	Mainstream
Finance, stores and procurement package.	Mainstream
Legal case management system includes a library of documents and workflows linked to a central database. Multiple operations and bulk processing are driven from a single input, whilst shared items can be used to store information related to a particular client, matter/case work.	Mainstream
Committee decisions management system used to manage authority business including ensuring relevant papers are published to members via the MFRA web page.	Mainstream
HR and payroll functionality to manage the entire employee lifecycle from recruitment to staff development, succession planning and payroll.	Mainstream
Software used by People and Organisational Development to produce organisational charts using the data exported from the HR system.	Mainstream
Scanning and document management solution used in People and Organisational Development.	Mainstream
Vehicle Fleet Management System.	Mainstream

Equipment/asset management system. Used on stations to ensure operational equipment is checked regularly and appropriately maintained.	Mainstream
BA (Breathing Apparatus) testing software.	Mainstream
Virtual reality incident command training software for emergency services.	Mainstream
CAD (Computer Aided Design) software used to create and amend building plans.	Mainstream
Training Resource Planner used at the Training and Development Academy.	Mainstream
Black box data logger on vehicles.	Mainstream
CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) This system logs all incoming emergency calls and supports the mobilisation of appropriate resources for incident management.	Mainstream
ICCS (Integrated Communications & Control System) integrated into the CAD System. This system enables Fire Control to utilise radio and telephony functions to manage incoming 999 calls and communicate with MFRS resources.	Mainstream
Management Information System providing senior officers with real time incident information and the organisation with incident history for trend analysis.	Mainstream
Data Mobilisation: Fire Control mobilise crews to incidents by sending a message to the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) installed in the Appliance. Crews also access risk information from the MDT.	Mainstream
Internally developed SQL based application to allow the detailed recording, monitoring and assessment of fire fighter competencies against national standards for firefighters.	Prohibited
A national software application used to enhance multi-agency working.	Mainstream
Health & Safety management information system.	Mainstream
Fire specific simulation and modelling software used by Strategy and Performance for operational response planning.	Mainstream
Shift pattern modelling software used by People and Organisational Development and Operational Response.	Mainstream
TRM (Time and Resource Management) staffing system.	Mainstream
Corporate gazetteer in use across the Authority to provide standardised address information and UPRN data to corporate systems and users.	Mainstream

Reporting tool used in Strategy and Performance to extract incident data for analysis.	Mainstream
Fire and Rescue Data Platform (FaRDaP) used to record and report incident data to MHCLG.	Mainstream
System that streamlines and enhances functionality relating to station plans, business intelligence, performance management and incident mapping.	Mainstream
SharePoint Portal is used to provide the corporate intranet and central repository for MFRA core data.	Mainstream
Geographical Information System used within Strategy and Performance to display and analyse geo-spatial datasets.	Mainstream
Fuel management system.	Mainstream
Online Portal for managing the processes around e-tendering and contracts.	Mainstream
A management system used by the National Resilience Assurance Team (NRAT) and the National Coordination Centre (FRSNCC).	Mainstream
An application used to collect and manage information relating to Protection, Prevention and Preparedness. All information will be stored in a single database and shared between the three functions.	Mainstream
An application produced by our internal development team that displays real-time locations and response coverage of MFRS appliances.	Mainstream
Learning Management System.	Mainstream
Water management solution that manages data relating to hydrants.	Mainstream
Secure national web platform for exercising, planning, response, recovery, information sharing, and mapping across multiple agencies.	Mainstream
Geographical Information System (used within Strategy and Performance) to create mapping and display and analyse geo-spatial datasets.	Mainstream
Cloud based fire control specific training application for training new staff at recruit level in call handling within a controlled environment.	New
AI-enabled platform for screening application responses in recruitment campaigns.	New

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# Transport Asset Management Plan

2026/2031

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## Transport Asset Management Plan

### 1 Overview

This plan supersedes all previous Transport Asset Management Plans (TAMP) and covers the period 2026/27–2030/31. The plan is updated on an annual basis in conjunction with the 5-year Capital Programme. The TAMP details all information relevant to the management and maintenance of the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) vehicle fleet.

The Operational Preparedness functional plan, Service Delivery Plan and Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) provide the focus for the annual review of the TAMP, which in turn guides the development of the proposed 5-year vehicle capital programme. Members consider the Capital Programme proposals as part of the Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan that is approved each year at the Budget Authority meeting.

The Transport Asset Management Plan assists the Service by

- Providing and maintaining a forward looking, progressive and robust transport service, which uses nationally agreed 'best practice' to enhance the current service provision, in turn facilitating improvement and innovation to service delivery.
- Making available all information regarding future intentions within the Transport function available to all areas of MFRS to assist with their future planning.

The objectives of the Transport Function are,

- To support MFRS vision and aims.
- To ensure the most efficient support and use of transport resources,
- To maintain the appropriate levels of operational capability,
- To reduce costs, offer value for money and to maintain a level of flexibility to adjust to the changing demands of MFRS,
- To facilitate the long-term planning of transport assets.
- To make provision for a long term sustainable environmentally friendly solution for the MFRA fleet.
- Compliance with His Majesty's Government's Road to Zero Strategy and the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution.

As a number of the vehicle assets have a longer asset life than 5 years the Operational Preparedness Directorate maintain a longer-term strategic asset review to ensure the requirements of the organisation are planned for. The strategic asset refresh review will incorporate consideration of new technologies and service developments. The governance of these programmes is through the Operations Board, SLT and the MFRA.

## 2 [Capital Expenditure](#)

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) has a five-year capital programme which supports a 20-year capital forecast.

The capital programme sets out in detail the anticipated expenditure for the current year and the following four years for all committed capital schemes approved by MFRA. The Capital programme is formally approved by the Fire and Rescue Authority on an annual basis.

The capital programme allows for flexibility to assist with any change in circumstances or new innovations.

The purpose of the TAMP is to provide focus as to how assets should be managed and how they support the objectives and priorities of MFRA. The plan is an essential tool in prioritising capital and revenue expenditure on assets to feed into respective capital and revenue plans.

The assessment of transport spending needs is based on several factors including vehicle age, condition, repair and projected maintenance costs plus the additional requirements of service delivery activity. This ensures that resources are targeted in the most effective way.

Where additional transport resources are required, capital and revenue bids are submitted as part of the budget making process annually. Flexibility exists within this process to allow for the introduction of any unplanned requirements that may emerge during the normal process of evaluation and innovation.

Capital bids are evaluated and prioritised and a full scheme appraisal is conducted. Once agreed at Director level the capital and revenue bids are submitted for MFRA consideration of affordability as part of the financial planning process.

## 3. [Transport Function](#)

The role of the transport function within MFRA is the provision and maintenance of vehicles and specialist equipment to meet user and stakeholder requirements. This in turn supports MFRA policies and legislative requirements. Whilst doing this, the ongoing promotion of environmental sustainability at a competitive price must be considered.

The Transport Department provides support to all departments within MFRS in addition to supporting external agencies (as agreed and as appropriate), in maintaining their emergency vehicles.

The Transport department operates an MOT testing station that carries out MOT's on MFRS and private vehicles.

The Transport department main areas of responsibility are.

- The design and procurement of fleet vehicles,

- Fleet management,
- Fleet maintenance,
- Engineering and technical support,
- Vehicle disposal.

**The Design and Procurement of Fleet Vehicles** – Detailed specifications are drawn up using an in-house consultation process with the proposed end users to ensure the final specification is fit for purpose. Research and development are carried out in house, a build design is agreed and the subsequent procurement of necessary parts, materials or whole vehicles is carried out in conjunction with the Procurement Team within MFRS. An outline of the process is highlighted below.



**Fleet management** - the management and upkeep of the MFRS vehicle fleet. This includes the management of.

- Fleet Compliance
- Vehicle Maintenance Records
- Vehicle Excise duty
- Registration and licensing
- Fuel
- Availability monitoring
- Incident investigation
- Whole life costs

**Fleet maintenance** - the repair and maintenance of vehicles and vehicle mounted equipment is undertaken by workshops within the Transport department. Specialist external contractors are engaged to deal with specialist repairs such as major RTC damage and specialist certification. Most repairs, maintenance, conversion or vehicle modifications is carried out in house by qualified certificated staff.

**Engineering and Technical Support** – the transport function is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to offer technical support to all departments within MFRS. This support can be verbal advice over the phone or a physical attendance by a member of the team. During normal working hours, faults are reported through the Tranman web portal and if required this is followed up with a telephone call to workshops where the correct response is decided. Out of normal working hours, faults are reported through the Tranman web portal and are followed up with a phone call to Control if the fault is major. Control will then contact the on-call transport manager who will determine the most efficient response. The major consideration is the length of time the vehicle will spend unavailable as this may have a significant impact on operational response. All requests to the function are dealt with within one hour of the initial call and a way forward is to be established within 2 hours. The function also provides the option for a mechanic to attend the operational fire ground to ensure appliance effectiveness and reliability is maintained at the incident should this be deemed necessary by the incident commander. The on-call transport manager will also advise on the locality and availability of spare appliances. This manager is also available to attend any incident that involves an MFRS vehicle.

**Vehicle Disposal** – the transport manager has responsibility for the disposal of fleet vehicles and their on-board equipment at end of life. Several considerations are taken into account prior to disposal, which are detailed below.

- The disposal of MFRS vehicles can be done in several ways including the use of auctions. Appliances may be sold to other end users such as other Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services, private Fire and Rescue Services or recognised training establishments.
- When a vehicle is identified for disposal from the MFRS fleet, consideration is made on age, condition and potential value. The Transport Manager will then recommend whether the vehicle is repurposed, scrapped, sold or donated to an overseas charitable organisation.
- The disposal of appliances at end of life has recently come under intense scrutiny. Vehicles which are deemed ready for disposal are done so utilising recommendations laid down by the security agencies and by the NFCC Transport Officers Group.
- The disposal of ancillary vehicles is now done through Brightwells via the Blue Light Commercial National framework.
- If the vehicle identified for disposal has a significant value, an SLT report will be provided and presented by the Area Manager for Operational Preparedness.

#### 4. [Vehicle Asset Management](#)

Asset management planning is the process used to plan for the acquisition, maintenance and disposal of renewable assets or activities in conjunction with NFCC Fire and Rescue Service best practice and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) guidelines.

All vehicular assets are purchased with a minimum of two years' warranty from the chassis manufacturer with an additional two-year warranty on the body and fittings from the body builder/contractor. Most light vehicles procured for the ancillary fleet come with a three-year warranty and carry a three-year roadside assistance package.

Specifications on new appliances and special vehicles are requested to be constructed of Co-polymer material. This affords MFRA the option of a second life for the body following refurbishment.

The Transport department provides the operational support to the MFRS vehicle fleet. This is for planned and unplanned maintenance. The Transport department has the responsibility of ensuring that the fleet is operated within Transport legislation and health and safety regulations. The support provided includes a reporting mechanism to respond to day-to-day unplanned repairs, notifiable defects, planned maintenance requests and advice.

This system provides for out of hours reporting and produces a full audit trail. All vehicle maintenance records are documented electronically along with a hard copy of service sheets. The vehicle renewal frequency is established based on historical information however remains open to change due to operational and economic circumstances. The current fleet has evolved over the years and includes a range of vehicles of a mixed age. History has shown the risk of obsolescence is high with several types of vehicles making them too difficult to maintain due to a lack of available components. (Asset refresh timescales are detailed in Section 6).

The decision to replace vehicles is determined by several factors as detailed previously. For budgetary purposes for the purchase of appliances, it is beneficial to spread the replacement cost over a longer period by replacing in small manageable numbers. Historical evidence has shown that if the vehicles are procured in larger numbers, then the capital replacement costs remain high at each replacement period. Replacing in small batches also allows MFRS to keep pace with new technology and innovations in design and development within the FRS business model.

An additional factor supporting smaller batch replacement of appliances takes into consideration the maintenance programme of these vehicles; large batches of vehicles purchased at the same time, will require servicing, testing or certification within the same timeframe providing avoidable capacity issues for workshops.

With regard to the smaller vehicles and the ancillary fleet, the factors guiding obsolescence and subsequent replacement are not subject to the same drivers. These vehicles tend to be less expensive than their operational counterparts and if replaced at regular pre-determined intervals provide a better residual value.

Organisational service integration - while the vehicle assets are the responsibility of the Transport department, several other departments within MFRS work in conjunction with the department to provide future planning, finance, governance and support.

## 5. [Vehicle Fleet](#)

The present vehicle fleet is broken down into eight categories for ease of identification,

- Pumping appliances
- Special appliances
- Aerial appliances
- Officer response vehicles
- Blue light ancillary
- Ancillary vehicles
- Marine fleet
- Lease cars
- Grey fleet (Non MFRS vehicles)

**Pumping appliances** - Vehicles that comprise of a water storage tank and a firefighting multi-pressure fire pump. These appliances are designed as rescue pumps that carry specialist rescue and cutting equipment.

Pumping appliances are placed into 5 groups to manage the replacement programme, they are, Papa 1, Papa 2, Papa 3, Reserve and Support.

**Special appliances** - Vehicles designed for specific or special functions such as demountable pods, water rescue, marine rescue, prime mover hook lifts and crane lorry.

**Aerial appliances** - Vehicles that have the capability of elevating a platform or ladder for high-rise rescue or firefighting as a water tower.

**Officer Response Vehicles** - These are vehicles used by Flexi Duty officers to respond to incidents under blue light conditions. These vehicles are a mixture of provided and lease vehicles. (See Section 8 for lease vehicles).

**Blue light ancillary** - These vehicles are smaller operational response vehicles, such as water support unit, water rescue unit, wildfire vehicle, drone vehicles etc.

**Ancillary vehicles** - Vehicles that are not used at operational incidents and are primarily used for other service delivery requirements, support services, detached duties, community risk management and general service transport. This fleet consists mainly of cars and vans.

**Marine Fleet** - MFRS Marine fleet consists of two Atlantic 85 ex RNLI rescue boats based on the River Mersey. We also currently have and two Atlantic 75 ex RNLI boats in reserve but these will be phased out over the next year.

**Lease Cars** - The majority of these cars are for Fire officers and used for response to emergency calls and personal use. There are also a number of cars used by managers in their day-to-day role within the authority. (See Section 8)

**Grey Fleet** - Vehicles that are privately owned by employees and are used in connection with the employer's business. These come in two categories: -Essential user and Casual user- Essential and Casual car user vehicles are privately owned and are for general business purposes – these categories are not used for emergency response.

### **Overview of Vehicle Types (as at 17 02 26)**

#### **Pumping Appliances**

- 33 x Rescue Pumps
- 1x Specialist Pump (SRT)
- 1 x MTA appliance
- 7 x Reserve appliances,
- 8 x TDA appliances
- 1 x Youth Engagement

#### **Special Appliances Operational**

- 4 Aerial Appliances
- HRET
- 2 Wildfire Vehicles
- 6 x Prime Movers
- 13 x Demountable pods
- 1 x Crane Lorry
- 1 x LGV Driver Training Vehicle
- 25 x Officer Response Cars
- 4 x IIT Vans
- 1 x Welfare Unit
- 1 x Water Rescue Unit
- 1 x Out of Area Deployment van
- 1 x Canine Unit
- 1 x HVP Support Van
- 2 x Atlantic 85 rescue boats
- 2 x Blue light Minibuses
- 1 x EX IRU ISAR

#### **Ancillary Vehicles**

- 21 x Station resilience cars
- 7 x PCV
- 108 cars and vans
- 42 Blue light ancillary vehicles
- 3 x Driver Training vehicles
- 1 x RTC Education van
- 1 x JCB Tele Truck
- 1 x JCB Telehandler

- 1 x Forklift Truck
- 15 x Trailers

#### Officers Lease Cars

- 23 x Cars

#### Vehicles identified for disposal

- 1 Appliances
- Ancillary cars and vans
- CSU
- 28m CPL
- 4x4 vehicle
- Various PODs
- 1 Canine vehicle
- 2 x Atlantic 75 rescue Boats

#### National Resilience Vehicles

- 6 x Prime Movers
- 8 x PODS
- 1 x DIM
- 1 x Toolcat

#### Reserve Fleet

The reserve fleet of pumping appliances are utilised for scheduled maintenance and non-scheduled repairs to the operational front-line and support appliances. Currently, MFRA maintains its reserve fleet of pumping appliances at 25% - 4 to 1.

We have three fully kitted reserve appliances which are used for scheduled maintenance on the appliance and all its equipment, short term repairs and modification programmes. This allows the downtime of the operational appliance to be kept to a minimum. MFRA have 4 un-kitted reserve appliances that are utilised for medium to long term unscheduled work. This is to ensure suitable and sufficient operational resilience is always available.

If there is an increase or decrease in the number of pumping appliances this ratio should be maintained.

## 6. [Asset Refresh Programme](#)

The timescales for the MFRS vehicle asset refresh programme is detailed below.

- Papa 1 and Papa 2 Pumping Appliances will be replaced at 10 years. This then creates a roll down process of the refreshed appliances to move to Papa 3, reserve and support appliances positions. This will enable MFRS to achieve a life period for Papa 3 and reserve appliances of no more than 16 years and support appliances of no more than 19 years. This is for the period 2026 -2031,

if there were to be an increase or decrease in fleet size, the replacement programme would need to be altered.

- Special Appliances are replaced after 15 Years.
- SRT appliance to be replaced at 10 years
- Officers Response Cars to be replaced after 5 years
- Blue Light Ancillary Vehicles to be replaced after 10 years.
- Ancillary Vehicles to be replaced between 5 -10 years dependant on use.
- Demountable Pods to be replaced after 20 years

A Long-Term Capability Management Programme has been established and introduced for the replacement of PODs following an extensive POD review process.

The timescales detailed above are accurate for front line use. It is anticipated that on occasion, vehicles may be kept past these dates but will not be used as part of the front-line operational response.

The replacement of ancillary vehicles is not solely based on age, the following factors are taken into consideration prior to the replacement of the vehicles.

- Condition
- Mileage
- Usage
- Reliability
- Corporate image
- Cost effectiveness

#### **Vehicle refresh for 2026/27 include**

- 3 B type Appliances
- Various PODs
- Various Cars and Vans.

A detailed breakdown of all vehicle purchases can be seen in the 5-year capital programme. (See Appendix 1)

#### **7. Environmental Considerations**

Ongoing practical considerations to reduce the carbon footprint of MFRS have been implemented over recent years. Environmental initiatives currently practiced within the Transport and Workshops departments are as follows.

- The re-grooving, casing and recycling of tyres.
- The recycling of lead acid batteries.
- The environmental disposal of waste, engine oil, filters and rags.
- The recycling of engine coolant.
- The recycling of waste metal.
- The recycling of appliances at end of life.
- The recycling and collection of office waste.

All the above initiatives have been captured as part of the current MFRS Environmental Policy.

Vehicle Emissions - the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified the following as potentially harmful gases:

- Carbon Monoxide (CO)
- Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>)
- Nitrous Oxide (NO)
- Hydro Fluorocarbons (HFC's)
- Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>)

The largest global emission by volume is carbon dioxide which originates from the burning of fossil fuels, including the combustion process that occurs in compression ignition or spark ignition motor vehicle engines.

MFRA have been proactive by continuing to purchase vehicles with the latest technology along with compliance with the government guidelines on exhaust emissions.

All vehicles registered after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 within the MFRA fleet must meet Euro 6 emission standards. The appliances purchased over recent years by MFRA have an integrated Euro 6 silencer which contains a full-flow particulate filter which features continuous regeneration and two parallel SCR catalysts with a unique high-precision Adblue dosage system.

The recent replacement of the smaller ancillary vehicles has resulted in a large drop in emissions due the procurement of new vehicles with smaller and more fuel efficient engines.

As part of the fleet decarbonisation process, the Transport department has Introduced 15 Petrol-Hybrid vehicles for use as Flexi-duty blue light response vehicles, replacing the diesel powered fleet vehicles. This will increase by a further 7 Petrol-Hybrids in early 2026.

### **New Government Emission Targets.**

In 2020, the government set new targets on vehicle emissions for vehicle manufacturers and transport operators to achieve.

Their main aim is to reduce pollutants produced by vehicle emissions and remove the sale of new petrol and diesel engine powered vehicles by 2035. In short, to move to using alternative powered vehicles.

Although the technology is available within the industry, it is mainly at this time used in small cars and vans. Technology to advance the driving range, the life of electric vehicle batteries and the performance of vehicles is improving all the time. These vehicles are however more expensive to purchase at present and charging infrastructure needs to be implemented before MFRA can move forward with introducing Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) into the fleet.

The Estates Department have implemented a programme to introduce charging points across many MFRS sites. This will enable the introduction of Plug-In Hybrid electric Vehicles (PHEV) and Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) within the MFRS ancillary fleet.

Developments are being made in the fire appliance market with two suppliers developing fully electric B type fire appliances. At present, these are expensive in comparison to their diesel equivalents (2-3 times more expensive). The Transport department will continue to monitor the development of these vehicles over the coming year.

The Authority needs to be mindful that continued investment is required to achieve the 2035 targets set out by the Government. Investment is needed in the vehicle capital refresh programme for its ancillary fleet of cars and vans and pumping appliances. Additional investment within the Estates Department will be needed for the phased implementation of the necessary infrastructure and facilities to charge vehicles at locations across the MFRA estate.

The Transport Manager is to undertake a study with other FRS Transport Managers/Fleet Engineers, to determine the best route for MFRS to take to achieve government targets, looking at: -

- Types of available vehicles and their capabilities
- Price of vehicles, Investigate purchase or lease options
- Maintenance costs
- Whole life costs.
- Charging infrastructure
- Government incentives and initiatives
- The Transport Manager is to consult with the estates manager for the future introduction of electric vehicle charging infrastructure at MFRA sites to coincide with the vehicle fleet refresh programme.

The move to ULEVs is a small part of a wider organisational move to net zero carbon emissions.

#### C.A.F.S (Compressed Air Foam System)

CAFS, which is utilised to enhance the MFRA firefighting capability has been utilised within the fleet since 2005. This system uses a foam/water/air mixture to produce a firefighting media that reduces the water consumption used during normal firefighting activities. This reduction in water also has the result of reducing the "Runoff" which is an environmental pollutant. Run off consists of the residual water utilised during firefighting operations which enters into the drainage, sewer system or natural water courses.

## 8. Vehicle Procurement Arrangements

MFRS have procured vehicles through leasing or outright purchase I.

- Senior Officer Vehicles - this scheme allows uniformed senior officers (and some designated non uniformed senior officers) to lease a vehicle for business and private use. These vehicles have to meet a set criteria set out within the relevant Service Instruction. The lease period is over four years and the vehicle is inspected prior to return to the lease company and any damage or excess mileage must be paid for.
- Fleet vehicles (Appliances & Ancillary vehicles) - over the years several fleet vehicles such as appliances and ancillary vehicles (cars & vans) have been procured through an operating lease scheme, this has proved to be expensive compared with outright purchase. Cars and vans procured by outright purchase have proven to be the best value option. Ancillary vehicles are purchased through a government framework agreement (Crown Commercial Services, YPO) and are kept for between 5 years and 10 years depending on use. At end of life the vehicles are disposed of through public auction. This has produced a good resale value and the whole life cost of those vehicles is below that of any lease or long-term hire agreement.
- With the potential introduction of ULEV's into the fleet an analysis of lease, versus outright purchase will be undertaken to determine the most cost-effective route to market for MFRS
- Fire appliances – these have on occasion been procured under an operating lease scheme; this has proven to be an expensive option due to the expectations of the lease company as to their condition on return. Experience has shown that following inspection by the FTA, certain repairs such as tyre wear and paint conditions have all required renovation at considerable cost. This type of scheme also inhibits the Service in extending the life of the appliance should they wish to do so and under the terms and conditions of an operating lease you cannot purchase the appliance from the lease company

## 9. [Spot Hire](#)

To maintain a fleet of ancillary vehicles that meet the needs of MFRA at all times is both impractical and expensive. There are times when there is a demand for vehicles which exceeds the current fleet size. The most cost-effective method to provide resources during this period is to “Spot Hire”. This involves hiring a vehicle for a short period at short notice. Having engaged with several vehicle hire companies MFRS has two primary vehicle hire companies that provide a low hire rate. The agreement also ensures that the vehicles are delivered to and collected from service premises.

## 10. [Whole Life Costs](#)

The whole life vehicle cost information can be found within the Fleet Management system (Tranman). This captures all costs for servicing and repairs which includes labour, parts, traffic accident damage, insurance, tyres and fuel.

MFRS have replaced fuel pumps at their premises. These systems will allow all fuel usage to be up-loaded into the fleet management system to be included in the vehicles whole life cost.

## 11. [Benchmarking](#)

Benchmarking is carried out routinely within the Northwest Transport Officers Group of which the MFRA Transport Manager is a standing member. This comprises of key performance indicators on servicing, non-scheduled work, modifications, Traffic Accident damage, whole life costs and research and development within the industry.

## 12. [Link to Business Continuity Plans](#)

MFRA has a Business Continuity Plan that is tested periodically throughout the year using different scenarios. ([Link to Transport Business Continuity Plan](#))

As part of our BCP we also have a formal agreement with our colleagues in the Northwest Fire and Rescue services for mutual assistance if they have the availability at the required times.

## 13. [Audit](#)

Liverpool City Council are commissioned for governance purpose to provide an audit for MFRA. During this process, the Transport Department is challenged on various sections of the work they carry out during the year. This usually consists of ensuring processes which are part of MFRA policies and procedures, and regulations relating to the transport department are adhered to.

If there are any shortcomings in these processes, then the auditor will make recommendations to remedy them in the final report.

An ongoing internal review is currently taking place to ensure MFRA have the most efficient and sustainable ancillary fleet as possible. Vehicle mileage and trip data will be analysed indicating low use vehicles within the Service. The Transport Management Team are actively looking for opportunity to reduce fleet wherever possible or extend the life of its current fleet vehicles. The Service have an aspiration to reduce ancillary fleet by approximately 10% this year.

A number of options will be considered to meet the vehicle needs of MFRS including the introduction of departmental pool systems and the potential use of casual and essential car users' schemes as an alternative to provided vehicles.

An expansion of the current fleet tracking system will be considered to aid the aspiration of a fleet reduction where possible.

Recommendations will be offered to the Strategic Leadership Team for consideration and endorsement prior to any change implementation or reduction of fleet.

**APENDIX 1**

**Vehicles Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Price Per Unit	Total		2026/27		2027/28		2028/29		2029/30		2030/31	
		Units	Cost £	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£
<b>VEH002 Ancillary Vehicles</b>	-												
<b>Cars</b>													
Pool Cars - Skoda Fabia	25,050	4	100,200	4	100,200								
Pool Cars - Possible Electric 25/26 Price	25,000	19	475,000	19	475,000								
Pool Cars - Possible Electric 28/29 Price	30,000	6	180,000					6	180,000				
Officer Response: Toyota Corolla Hybrid 2025/26 Price	30,000		26,800		26,800								
Officer Response: Toyota Corolla Hybrid 2029/30 Price	35,000	22	770,000							15	525,000	7	245,000
Vehicle Trackers			16,700		16,700								
Ford Focus Automatic	35,000	1	35,000							1	35,000		
People Carrier, 7 seater	40,000	2	80,000							2	80,000		
Mini Bus, 17 Seater	60,000	2	120,000							2	120,000		
<b>4X4s</b>													
Isuzu	35,000	1	35,000	1	35,000								
<b>Vans</b>													
Master/Transit Panel	36,900	1	36,900	1	36,900								
Ford Transit	38,500	2	77,000	2	77,000								
Ford Transit Connect, possible electric	35,000	2	70,000									2	70,000
Panel	38,000	1	38,000	1	38,000								
Panel - RTC reduction	45,000	1	45,000	1	45,000								
Courier	40,000	4	160,000	4	160,000								
Ford Courier, possible electric	30,000	12	360,000									12	360,000
Water Rescue Van	50,000	1	50,000	1	50,000								
Operational Equipment Transit	40,000	2	80,000			2	80,000						
Hydrant Transit	40,000	2	80,000			2	80,000						
T&DA Transit	40,000	2	80,000			2	80,000						
Occupational Health Transit	50,000	1	50,000					1	50,000				

**Vehicles Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Price Per Unit	Total		2026/27		2027/28		2028/29		2029/30		2030/31	
		Units	Cost £	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£
<b>Mini Buses</b>													
Fire Service - Blue Light	45,000	1	45,000	1	45,000								
Princes Trust - Disabled Access	44,000	1	44,000	1	44,000								
Princes Trust	36,900	3	110,700	3	110,700								
			<b>3,165,300</b>		<b>1,260,300</b>		<b>240,000</b>		<b>230,000</b>		<b>760,000</b>		<b>675,000</b>
<b>VEH004 Special Vehicles</b>													
Prime Movers Long Term Capability Management	181,400	2	362,800			2	362,800						
POD Long Term Capability Management	210,600	1	210,600	1	210,600								
Prime Movers	210,000	2	420,000			2	420,000						
Incident Command Unit	650,000	1	650,000	1	650,000								
BA Support Unit (POD) - NEW	250,000	1	250,000	1	250,000								
Wildfire Appliance 4x4	75,000	2	150,000	2	150,000								
Curtain Sided Truck (Driving School)	86,000	1	86,000			1	86,000						
Water Rescue Unit	70,400	1	70,400	1	70,400								
Crane Lorry	200,000	1	200,000			1	200,000						
Water Bowser Appliance	275,000	1	275,000			1	275,000						
Welfare Vehicle	90,000	1	90,000							1	90,000		
Fork Lift Truck	75,000	1	75,000							1	75,000		
TDA Tele Truck	75,000	1	75,000									1	75,000
Youth Engagement Vehicle	100,000	1	100,000							1	100,000		
			<b>3,014,800</b>		<b>1,331,000</b>		<b>1,343,800</b>				<b>265,000</b>		<b>75,000</b>

**Vehicles Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2030/31**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Price Per Unit	Total		2026/27		2027/28		2028/29		2029/30		2030/31	
		Units	Cost £	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£
<b>VEH010 Marine Rescue Vessels</b>													
RNLI Class 75 Rib Boats (Equipment)	200,000	2	458,700		43,600		15,100	2	400,000				
			<b>458,700</b>		<b>43,600</b>		<b>15,100</b>		<b>400,000</b>				
<b>VEH001 Fire Appliances</b>													
2025/26 Price - CFO/01/2526	370,000		3,300		3,300								
2026/27 Price - CFO/01/2526	379,200	6	2,275,200	6	2,275,200								
2029/30 Price - CFO/01/2526	400,000	6	2,400,000							6	2,400,000		
2030/31 Price	450,000	4	1,800,000									4	1,800,000
			<b>6,478,500</b>		<b>2,278,500</b>						<b>2,400,000</b>		<b>1,800,000</b>
<b>WOR001 Workshop Equipment</b>													
Machine Shop Equipment			65,900		15,900				50,000				
Workshop Equipment			10,000						10,000				
Rolling Road Replacement (MOT bay)			11,700		11,700								
Workshop Equip Somers vehicle Lift.	25,000	1	25,000			1	25,000						
HGV Brake Tester	40,000	1	40,000			1	40,000						
2 Post Vehicle Lift	20,000	2	40,000							2	40,000		
4 Post Vehicle Lift	20,000	2	40,000	2	40,000								
			<b>232,600</b>		<b>67,600</b>		<b>65,000</b>		<b>60,000</b>		<b>40,000</b>		
			<b>13,349,900</b>		<b>4,981,000</b>		<b>1,663,900</b>		<b>690,000</b>		<b>3,465,000</b>		<b>2,550,000</b>

<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>BUDGET AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>26 FEBRUARY 2026</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/41/2526</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE, DEB APPLETON</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>HEAD OF D&amp;T, PAUL TERRY, D&amp;T SERVICE DELIVERY MANAGER, LYNDSEY KILLEEN</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>HEAD OF PROCUREMENT, HYWYN PRITCHARD STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>MICROSOFT ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT RENEWAL 2026</b>		
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>NONE</b>		

### Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members approve the renewal of the Authority's Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA) and in doing so award the contract to Phoenix Software Limited to act as the Authority's Microsoft Licensing Solution Provider (LSP).

### Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members;
  - a) note the contents of the report; and
  - b) approve the award of a contract to Phoenix Software Limited to act as the Authority's Microsoft LSP for three years from April 2026 for £1.044m

### Introduction and Background

#### Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA)

3. For many years, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service has used Microsoft products across the organisation.
4. A Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA) allows organisations with over 500 users or devices to purchase a range of Microsoft software and cloud services under a single agreement.

5. Microsoft EA agreements assist with effective budget management by deploying a common IT platform across the Authority's estate and allowing fixed pricing over the duration of the EA Agreement.
6. Microsoft EA Agreements span a three-year period with the Authority's current agreement due to expire on 31st March 2026.

#### Licensing Solution Provider (LSP)

7. A Microsoft EA agreement can only be purchased via a Microsoft accredited LSP, with the most efficient and effective route being to use a procurement framework.
8. Officers further reviewed the market for the best value for money option. Options to procure collectively under the CCS framework and a direct award were explored.
9. The option to procure via direct award to Phoenix Software Limited through framework agreement Y230065 – Software Products and Associated Services provided by Procurement Services (acting on behalf of Kent County Council), offered a reduction in cost over the three-year contract, in comparison to procuring via CCS frameworks preferred bidder.

#### Procurement Services

10. Procurement Services is a wholly owned business unit of Kent County Council and is one of the largest local authority owned trading organisations of its kind in the UK.
11. Since inception as the supplies division of Kent County Council, Procurement Services has grown to become one of the leading suppliers of products and services to the education and public sectors who focus on providing compliant routes to market for the provision of products and services.
12. For these reasons and following consultation with the Head of Procurement, it was agreed that Y230065 – Software Products and Associated Services provided by Procurement Services would be the more efficient and cost-effective route to market for the Authority on this occasion.

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

13. Microsoft is committed to creating inclusive environments and through a range of methods with its culture of inclusion driving future innovation.
14. More information on Microsoft Global Diversity and Inclusion can be found at: [Microsoft Global Diversity and Inclusion | Microsoft](#)

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#### **Staff Implications**

15. Staff will continue to benefit from a common IT platform across the Authority's estate which aids organisational effectiveness and efficiency and will have access to new software versions upon release.

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### **Legal Implications**

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16. A compliant procurement process has been undertaken through the use of Procurement Services Framework Number Y23065 – Software Products and Associated Services.
17. Subject to Authority approval, a contract awarded pursuant to this process would comply with its Contract Standing Orders and be compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

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

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18. The total cost of this contract is £1.044m for three years, £0.344m in year one, £0.350m in year two and £0.350m in year three of the agreement.
19. This includes the cost of Microsoft licenses and Microsoft Azure cloud services.
20. The above costs will be contained within existing budgets.

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

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21. Adoption of this proposal helps to maintain our robust business continuity arrangements and supports the development of bespoke solutions to meet the Authority's business needs.

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### **Environmental Implications**

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22. The Microsoft EA Agreement offers significant water conservation and waste reduction benefits with Microsoft remaining committed to its 2030 goals to become carbon negative, water positive and zero waste whilst protecting ecosystems.

Further details can be found at:

[2025 Environmental Sustainability Report | Microsoft](#)

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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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23. This solution ensures staff have access to a common IT platform, together with increased security and benefit from new software versions upon release.
24. The suppliers experience and expertise in the supply of EA Agreements and provision of existing products to the Authority will further enhance the service provided to the organisation's employees.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**NONE**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**MFRA** Merseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **A**uthority

**MFRS** Merseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **S**ervice

**EA** Enterprise **A**greement

**LSP** Licensing **S**olution **P**rovider

**CCS** Crown **C**ommercial **S**ervices

<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>BUDGET AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>26 FEBRUARY 2026</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/39/2526</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>AREA MANAGER, MARK BALDWIN</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>SENIOR PREPAREDNESS ADMINISTRATION MANAGER, COLETTE DUNNE</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>HEAD OF PROCUREMENT, HYWYN PRITCHARD, PROCUREMENT OFFICER, LORETTA CRANNEY, GROUP MANAGER, PHIL BYRNE, TRANSPORT MANAGER, DAVE SEAMAN, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>BULK FUEL CONTRACT 2026-2028</b>		
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>NONE</b>		

### Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the outcome of a procurement exercise and to seek authorisation to award a contract for the provision of bulk diesel fuel.

### Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members;
  - a) note the content of this report; and
  - b) approve the award of the contract to Standard Fuels Ltd for the provision of bulk diesel fuel supplies for an estimated contract value of £440,000.

### Introduction and Background

3. For the majority of its fleet vehicles, MFRS uses diesel fuel with all fire appliances being diesel engines. MFRS utilises 8 diesel tanks and 2 mobile diesel bowser units to provide operational response fuel resilience under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
4. MFRS has a tank management system to record and monitor all the transactions, gauge readings, activity and deliveries.
5. The current contract for the supply of diesel bulk fuels is due to expire on 31/3/2026.

6. Utilising the CCS framework for the provision of diesel fuel under a new contract was identified as the best route to market. This framework enables procurement by using collective purchasing power through aggregating the volumes required for all public sector customers part of the tender to achieve economies of scale. CCS conducted a further competition under the framework inviting all suppliers on the framework to bid based on the quantities supplied by the public sector customers.
7. CCS evaluated the bids and identified the preferred bidder as Standard Fuel Ltd for the provision of bulk diesel fuel. The estimated contract value for a 2-year contract commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 is £440,000 based on previous consumption levels and the fixed pricing offered by the preferred bidder Standard Fuels Ltd.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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8. There are no equality and diversity implications arising out of this report.

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### **Staff Implications**

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9. There are no staff implications with the new contract. The postholders will continue to manage the ordering of bulk fuel and recording on the management system within Ops Preparedness.
10. MFRS users will see no change as bulk fuel will be continued to be delivered as normal.

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### **Legal Implications**

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11. The procurement process was conducted under a framework with CCS and is compliant with the Authority's Contract Standing Orders and the Public Contracts Regulations as applicable. This ensures a fair and transparent route to market for all suppliers on the framework.
12. MFRS have a statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to maintain business continuity arrangements so that critical functions can continue to be delivered. The National Risk Planning assumptions and the Merseyside Resilience Forum Fuel Plan on fuel sets out for Category 1 Responders to plan to be self-reliant in fuel. The 8 Diesel Tanks provides this self-reliance for MFRS.

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

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13. The total anticipated cost of the contract for the two-year term is £440,000. The costs can be contained within existing budgets.

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

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14. All MFRS diesel tanks have been risk assessed, and a maintenance service is carried out annually.

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**Environmental Implications**

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15. Diesel Spillage kits are available at all MFRS tank sites and all front-line appliances carry spillage kits.

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<b>Contribution to Our Vision:</b>	<b><i>To be the best Fire &amp; Rescue Service in the UK.</i></b>
Our Purpose:	<i>Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.</i>

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16. MFRS are ensuring fuel business continuity arrangements are in place so critical functions can continue to be delivered for the community they serve.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**NONE**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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<b>MFRS</b>	<b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service</b>
<b>MFRA</b>	<b>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority</b>
<b>CCS</b>	<b>Crown Commercial Services</b>

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<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>BUDGET AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>26 FEBRUARY 2026</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/42/2526</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>AREA MANAGER, MARK BALDWIN</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>GROUP MANAGER, CHRIS MAN, GROUP MANAGER PHIL BYRNE</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>HEAD OF PROCUREMENT, HYWYN PRITCHARD, STATION MANAGER, MIKE BROADLEY, TACTICAL FIREFIGHTING DEPARTMENT, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF BREATHING APPARATUS</b>		

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

1. To inform Members of the outcome of the North West regional Breathing Apparatus (BA) procurement exercise and to seek approval to award a contract for the supply of BA equipment and associated ancillary items, following completion of the procurement process.

### **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that Members;
  - a) note the contents of this report; and
  - b) approve the award of the contract for Breathing Apparatus equipment and associated ancillary items to the successful bidder, Interspiro Ltd, for an estimated value of £2,000,000.

### **Introduction and Background**

3. The current Breathing Apparatus equipment in use within Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) has been supplied since 2010 and includes BA sets, compressed air cylinders, entry control boards, and associated ancillary equipment. Supplementary air supply equipment is currently provided under a separate contractual arrangement.
4. MFRS is a member of the North West Operational Equipment Group, which reports into the North West Operational Preparedness, Response and Resilience (OPRR) Committee. A key priority agreed by the group was the

development of a coordinated regional asset refresh programme for Breathing Apparatus equipment.

5. A regional procurement exercise was therefore undertaken using the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service framework agreement. (Note that this enabling agreement expires on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2028.) This route to market was selected to ensure compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the Authority's Contract Standing Orders, and established regional governance arrangements.
6. While elements of the existing Breathing Apparatus provision retain residual service life, proceeding with contract award at this stage secures access to a compliant route to market, provides pricing certainty, and reduces future procurement and market risk associated with deferring award until assets reach end of life.

### Procurement Process

7. The procurement exercise was designed to ensure transparency, fairness, and robust technical evaluation. The lead authority for the regional procurement process was Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service provided legal support.
8. The process comprised the following stages:
  - Supplier engagement: Each participating supplier was provided with a full day to present their proposed solutions, technical capabilities, and product ranges to the regional procurement group.
  - Tender evaluation: Written submissions were evaluated against a published and weighted evaluation methodology by technical leads from participating Fire and Rescue Services.
  - Wearer trials: Wearer trial were conducted across various locations within Merseyside including the MFRS Training and Development Academy, the Mersey tunnels as well as high rise buildings. Operational personnel undertook a range of realistic tasks, including working at height, at depth, in heat and smoke conditions, and while wearing gas-tight suits.
9. Three suppliers submitted compliant bids and progressed through the evaluation and trial stages of the process.
10. During the trial phase, equipment issues were identified with more than one supplier. These were recorded in accordance with the agreed evaluation methodology and were reflected objectively within the final scoring.

## Outcome of the Procurement

11. Following completion of evaluation, moderation, and quality assurance, a single bidder was identified as achieving the highest overall score when assessed against the published evaluation criteria, including technical performance, usability, safety, and whole-life cost considerations.
12. The successful bidder was identified as Interspiro Ltd.

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## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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13. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed at a regional level led by LFRS and is contained in appendix A.
14. Equality and diversity considerations informed both specification development and evaluation and included:
  - Accessibility and readability of gauges and entry control boards, including considerations for neuro-divergent staff.
  - Weight, size, and ergonomic design to ensure suitability across a diverse operational workforce.
  - Training and familiarisation requirements to ensure equitable access to competence.

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## **Staff Implications**

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15. Engagement with operational staff took place prior to specification development to ensure that operational requirements informed the procurement exercise.
16. Operational personnel participated directly in wearer trials, enabling structured feedback on comfort, usability, and performance under realistic conditions.
17. Subject to approval of the contract award, implementation will give rise to training and transition activity, including:
  - Familiarisation and safe-use training for all BA wearers.
  - Face-fit testing for operational staff and those attending commercial courses.
  - Maintenance and technician training.
  - Training associated with new functionality and revised operational procedures.

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**Legal Implications**

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18. The procurement exercise was undertaken in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Authority's Contract Standing Orders.
19. To be compliant any call-off contract awarded under the previously stated framework agreement has to be executed by no later than the date of its expiry i.e. 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

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**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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20. The regional procurement exercise estimated a total value of approximately £10,000,000 to be procured across participating North West Fire and Rescue Services under the framework.
21. The Authority will enter into a call off contract under the framework and based on current assumptions, the maximum indicative cost to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority is estimated to be in the region of £2,000,000.

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**Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

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22. Implementation of the new Breathing Apparatus equipment will require a managed transition, including:
  - Schedule of works for the transition over to the new equipment.
  - The development and approval of new technical notes and service instructions.
  - A review and update of relevant risk assessments.
  - Structured planning for face-fit testing and training delivery.
23. No unmitigated safety-critical risks have been identified through the procurement or trial process that would preclude approval of the contract award.

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**Environmental Implications**

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24. Following successful implementation, MFRS will seek to re-sell or donate legacy equipment where reasonably practicable, reducing waste sent to landfill.
25. Planned replacement supports improved lifecycle efficiency and aligns with the Authority's Net Zero 2040 ambitions by reducing reliance on piecemeal component replacement and extending the operational life of modern equipment.

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

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26. Approval of the contract award supports the Authority's vision by ensuring firefighters are equipped with modern, reliable respiratory protection, enhancing operational effectiveness, supporting firefighter health, and maintaining public confidence through transparent and accountable procurement.

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**NONE**

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## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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<b>BA</b>	<b>B</b> reathing <b>A</b> pparatus
<b>MFRA</b>	<b>M</b> erseyside <b>F</b> ire and <b>R</b> escue <b>A</b> uthority
<b>MFRS</b>	<b>M</b> erseyside <b>F</b> ire and <b>R</b> escue <b>S</b> ervice
<b>TDA</b>	<b>T</b> raining and <b>D</b> evelopment <b>A</b> cademy

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## FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/EQUALITY ANALYSIS

### FORM HRFEIA

<b>Name of Proposal (Policy, Decision, Strategy, Service, Function, Other (Please indicate))</b>	Replacement for the PS 7000 SCBA sets to Northwest Fire & Rescue Services (NWFRS) (Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Isle of Man, Lancashire, Merseyside and Northern Ireland) To replace front line SCBA and telemetry. Specification which are robust, responsive, design to comply with all current UK Acts and Regulations and with Standards BS EN conforming to a minimum ISA-12.12.01-2007 Non incentive Electrical Equipment for Use in Class I and II, Division 2, groups C IEC 60950-1:2005+A1:2009+A2:2013 Information Technology Equipment To procure new Breathing Apparatus Sets and ancillary equipment that can deliver the best respiratory protection and safety of the regions' firefighters.
<b>Name Lead Officer Job Designation</b>	LFRS Equipment & BA Officer
<b>Department</b>	LFRS Fleet & Engineering
<b>Telephone Number E-Mail Address</b>	07810503566 rodneysteele@lancsfireandrescue.org.uk
<b>Date of Assessment/Analysis</b>	28/05/25

We carry out Full Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)/analysis where we are unsure or know that the proposal/policy/decision will have an impact on an equality group or further to completing an initial analysis negative impacts have been identified. The EIA should be undertaken/started at the beginning of the proposal/policy development process before any decision is made. It will be updated through the decision making/policy development process to inform the decision-making process and then it is completed.

### 1. Overview

<b>The main aims/objectives of this proposal (project, function, service, policy<sup>1</sup> )</b>
The following is to tender from a Framework Agreement: To supply front line fire appliances with a new enhanced Self-contained Breathing Apparatus. They shall meet the demands of the operational fire-fighting environment. The use of SCBA in Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) and the Northwest region shall meet the health and safety commitments are combined with the environmental and employee wellbeing commitments into one Safety, Health, and Environment Policy.

<sup>1</sup> Policy refers to any policy strategy, procedure, function decision or delivery of service

The wider management systems break down aspects of risk within LFRS and the region and detail how as organisations are going to establish risk controls and required actions to achieve compliance with the wider safety, health, and environmental legislation.

**Is the policy or decision new or under review or existing<sup>2</sup>**

New/Proposed

Modified/Reviewed/Updated/Adapted

Existing but new EIA

**List the groups of people potentially affected by this proposal (e.g. job applicants, employees, customers, members of the public):**

All members of operational staff within the Northwest Region Fire and Rescue Services who will be attending incidents or training exercises applicable to their rank/role or instructed by the incident commander.

**2. Findings/Evidence**

**Findings/Evidence: The following information/data has been considered in developing this proposal (This may include census data, the results of any consultation with community groups or representative bodies.)**

<b>What did you do/consider?</b>	<b>What did it say/What are your findings.</b>
<p><b>List any consultation with employee voice groups, employees, unions, members of the public.</b></p> <p><b>List any methods used to analyse data to understand the impact on people (e.g. work force census profiles, performance, incident data)</b></p>	<p>Working vice groups have now feed back in from the consultation period with their comments and findings added to this EIA.</p>
<p>Framework Agreement for Supply and Delivery of Emergency Response Equipment and Associated Services C002687.</p> <p>BS EN469: 2020 Level 2</p>	<p>The documents detail the names of suppliers who make the SCBA and telemetry which meets the required standard. To procure new Breathing Apparatus Sets and ancillary equipment that can deliver the best respiratory protection and safety of the regions' firefighters.</p> <p>This equipment will be: -</p>

<sup>2</sup> To tick the box: right click, properties, click check the box

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fit for purpose and meet a high standard of user expectations for ease of wear, operation and use</li> <li>- Latest technology to include telemetry enhancements will be used to support the user's safety and comfort</li> <li>- In line with H&amp;S requirements</li> </ul> <p>The standard details the composition of the SCBA which is required to ensure the safety of operational staff. The construction does not contain any animal products. All of the components are tested in their entirety all products have had an upgrade in certain areas. Further findings to come out from the evaluation in September.</p>
Feedback from the NorthWest evaluation Group	This has been completed with positive feed back prior to implementation into service.
Consultation with HSEAG	Progress no concerns in relation to the proposal
Consultation with Unions	FBU and UNISON representatives included in initial consultation, no objections received to date – will update at close of consultation period w/c 01/03/25
Consultation with Employee Voice Groups	Revised EIA circulated to all Employee Voice Groups for comment and updated is in process to the draft copy..

### 3. Equality Impact

Using the table below please indicate what impact will the implementation of this proposal have on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010.

<b>Equality</b>	<b>Positive Impact</b> It could benefit	<b>Negative Impact</b> It could disadvantage	<b>Neutral / No Impact</b>	<b>Reason why there is a positive and negative impact</b> and any mitigating actions already in place to reduce any negative impact
<b>Age</b> People of all ages			x	<p>The Breathing Apparatus (BA) set can be used by all operational staff of any age.</p> <p>Masks are of various sizes and will fit everyone. Mask fitting will be carried out by a qualified technician.</p> <p>Height adjustment - in height for disability or sex. The set should adjust to enable users of differing heights to wear.</p>

<p><b>Disability</b> Physical, Learning Disability Learning Difficulty Mental Health, Carers of disabled people</p>		<p>x</p>	<p>To wear BA, users need to pass fitness and medical tests as per policy. Where applicable, reasonable.</p> <p>Set adjustment to facilitate those living with a stoma/diabetes. Given the positioning and requirement of waist straps it may impinge on the stoma or diabetes pumps which are often worn around the waist.</p> <p>Adjustments can be made for staff with these conditions.</p> <p>Grip/hand use to facilitate airflow and/or set displays. Consideration should be given to individuals who may have reduced use of their digits or hands. Individuals may be able to meet the entry requirements and maintain grip strength however with reduce dexterity the set should enable the flow of air and use of gauge.</p> <p>Learning disabilities - hearing aids can be used the size and readability of the text/icons on any electronic screens will be in accordance with neurodiverse users. The equipment can be fitted with special frames to allow for users wearing spectacles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hypersensitivity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loud or unexpected noises can trigger anxiety, stress, and sensory overload.</li> <li>• Specific frequencies, like high-pitched tones or repetitive noises, can be particularly distressing.</li> <li>• Example: A child with autism might become overwhelmed by the noise of a playground.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Hyposensitivity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some individuals with ADHD may find that high levels of noise or complex sounds actually help them focus or reduce boredom.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Example: An individual with ADHD might find it easier to concentrate in a busy office environment than in a quiet room.</li> <li>• <b>Individual Differences:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neurodivergent individuals can have very different responses to sound, and what is considered comfortable or bothersome can vary widely.</li> <li>• Complete silence can also be disorienting or anxiety-provoking for some individuals.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Sound Masking:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound masking, which involves creating a constant, low-level background noise, can help to reduce the impact of disruptive noises in a workspace, <a href="#">according to Remark Group</a>.</li> <li>• Example: A sound masking system in a classroom can help to mask distracting conversations or noises.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Pink Noise:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pink noise, which has a balanced and calming sound profile, may be a good alternative for neurodivergent individuals who find other noise types too stimulating, <a href="#">says Life Skills Advocate</a>.</li> <li>• Example: Pink noise can be used as background music to help reduce anxiety in a classroom or workplace.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Reduce Noise Levels:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize disruptive noises and echoes in environments where</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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				<p>neurodivergent individuals are present, <a href="#">suggests Danfloor</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Control Frequency:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the impact of different sound frequencies and choose options that are less likely to be triggering for sensitive individuals.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Provide Options:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer a variety of soundscapes and noise levels to accommodate individual preferences, <a href="#">according to Milliken</a>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Individualization:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize that everyone's sensory experience is unique and that individual needs should be considered.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Gender Identity/ Gender Reassignment</b>			x	Anybody can use this equipment as long as they pass the fitness and medical tests.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>			x	<p>Female firefighters as soon as they are aware they are pregnant further to a risk assessment are taken off operational activity to protect themselves and the unborn child. This policy decision is taken in line with national FRS guidance and the inability to control what incident types a pregnant firefighter would be exposed to.</p> <p>New and expectant mothers undergo a person specific risk assessment with their line manager with support from the Occupational Health Unit which ensures that health and safety is ensured through the pregnancy when they are in workplace and upon return after childbirth.</p>

				Full training and testing will be given on return to work in line with LFRS Training policies.
<b>Race</b> Ethnicity Nationality			x	<p>It is recommended that head coverings, such as hijabs, patkas, and kippahs/yarmulkes should be made of natural fibres.</p> <p>Hijabs have been tested with the breathing apparatus and suitable hijabs to wear under BA Firehoods can be ordered, if necessary. A separate EIA for hijabs has been written in consultation with the Inclusion Team.</p> <p>Due to the facemask head harness, turbans worn by Sikhs are not permitted in accordance with Section 6 of the Deregulation Act 2015 (which came into force on 1 April 2015) and which amends Sections 11 and 12 of the Employment Act 1989. Devout male Sikh operational staff can alternatively wear their hair in a top knot. However, it should be pointed out that the main issue of wearing BA sets does not pertain to hair length nor the wearing of a helmet, but the effectiveness of the face mask seal.</p> <p>Regarding facial hair due to religious beliefs, firefighters have to be clean shaven to comply with RPE legislation. We have investigated alternatives but if the manufacturers' advice is that wearers need to be clean shaven in such a way that facial hair does not affect the face seal, we must comply with their instructions as an approved code of practice. Allowing facial hair is considered as an intolerable risk as per HSE guidelines, there is therefore the potential for a negative impact.</p>
<b>Belief or Religion</b>			x	Anybody can use this equipment if they pass the fitness and medical tests
<b>Gender</b> Men/Women			x	<p>Users with long hair should follow guidelines.</p> <p>The main issue of wearing BA sets does not pertain to hair length nor the wearing of a helmet, but the effectiveness of the face mask seal.</p>

				The equipment will be lighter and more ergonomic, hence, and therefore this has a positive impact where strength can be a challenge. This will be evaluated at the trials in September, but data is already showing it will be lighter from the suppliers.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> Lesbian, Gay, bisexual and straight people			x	There is no adverse impact on this group
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> (employment only)			x	There is no adverse impact on this group
<b>Other groups who are not protected under the Equality Act</b> Examples include social economic factors (i.e. poverty, isolation), unemployment, homelessness, rurality, health inequalities any other disadvantage.			x	There is no adverse impact on any other group
<b>Contributes to equality of opportunity</b>			x	No
<b>Contributes to fostering good relationships between different groups</b>			x	No
<b>The decision will be taken in compliance</b>	Yes			x
	No			

<b>with Human Rights</b> <sup>3</sup>		
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#### 4. Outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment: Actions to be taken

<b>What course of action does the Equality Impact assessment Suggest you take</b>	
<b>Outcome 1 - No major change required</b> The EIA has not identified any potential discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Outcome 2 - Adjust the policy</b> To remove the negative impact identified in the EIA or to promote better equality.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Outcome 3 - Continue with the policy despite negative impact – Stop and Think</b> You need to ensure the Equality Impact Assessment clearly sets out the justification for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and to monitor impact. Complete the EIA Action Plan.  If you are continuing with the policy despite the negative impact you need to seek guidance from the Head of Human Resources as this shows the EIA demonstrates a significant impact on people with a protected characteristic	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 5. Equality Impact Assessment/ Analysis Action Plan and Review

As a result of performing this analysis, what actions are proposed to remove or reduce any negative impact of adverse outcomes identified on people (employees, applicants, customers, members of the public) who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or who are non-legislative characteristics.

Further action required: Yes  No

<b>Impact identified on the Protected Characteristics</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Review Date</b>

<sup>3</sup> Human Rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in Europe regardless of nationality and citizenship. Human Rights are based on the five FREDA principles: Fairness, Respect, Equality, Dignity, Autonomy.


**5.1 The completed EIA should be attached to the management/project report, so the details can be considered as part of the decision-making process at the relevant Board/Meeting.**

**5.2 Update the EIA monitoring spreadsheet on the R Drive.**

**Equality Impact Assessment Approved By: Asst Director HR**

**Date Approved:**

<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>BUDGET AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>26 FEBRUARY 2026</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/43/2526</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, NICK MERNOCK</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>APPRENTICESHIP MANAGER, ASHLEY ROBERTS</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>HEAD OF PROCUREMENT, HYWYN PRITCHARD, WORKFORCE PLANNING AND OD MANAGER, JOHN PRICE, HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES, MIKE PILKINGTON, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF PERSONAL AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING SERVICES</b>		

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

1. To inform Members of the outcome of the procurement exercise and to seek authorisation to procure personal and leadership development training services.

### **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that Members;
  - a) note the contents of the report; and
  - b) approve the award of a contract for the supply of personal and leadership development training services to Brathay Trust Ltd for a duration of 4 years with an option to extend for 1 year and with a total value of up to £432,000.

### **Introduction and Background**

3. The Authority has been utilising outdoor and residential activity-based programmes which include reflective practice, coaching and facilitated learning as part of its suite of employee development programmes for over a decade.
4. The programmes - which are designed in partnership with members of the Authority's Training and Organisational Development teams - enable participants to develop self-awareness, resilience, confidence and effective leadership

behaviours in a practical way, with participants encouraged to step outside their comfort zones, and demonstrate adaptability, and collaborative problem-solving.

5. Incorporating this learning approach in development programmes has played a pivotal role in enhancing leadership capability and embedding the Service's values and behaviours across Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.
6. As well as being fully incorporated into the Authority's Charter Management Institute (CMI) leadership development programmes, each new firefighter recruit cohort also undertakes a three-day residential activity-based development programme as part of their initial firefighter recruit training course.
7. Experience has shown that this type of course provides a strong foundation for firefighter recruits both in terms of personal effectiveness and team integration, with recruit cohorts building trust, communication skills and developing mutual reliance—core attributes for safe and effective operational firefighting.
8. The current arrangement for the provision of development training has been in place since 2022 and in advance of a new procurement process, a review of Service requirements was undertaken and a new specification for future service needs was created.
9. Following advice from the Procurement Team, The Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation framework agreement was selected as an appropriate route to market. This framework agreement establishes a fully transparent process, providing suppliers with all tender documents, including full requirements specification, evaluation criteria and contract terms at the start of the Invitation to Tender (ITT) process, allowing them to make a more informed decision on whether to participate.
10. On the conclusion of the ITT, one response was received which was by Brathay Trust Ltd.
11. Following the completion of an appropriate selection process, including presentation, Brathay Trust Ltd have been determined as suitable for this provision.
12. The Authority has experience of working with Brathay Trust Ltd, and as incumbent provider it has previously worked in partnership to deliver high quality, bespoke training for a range of learning requirements across Apprenticeship personal development, Firefighter recruit training and Supervisory Manager (Leading Others) and Middle Manager (Leading the Function) leadership development training.
13. The award of a contract for a term of four years would allow the Authority to plan its provision of personal development, leadership and values development as part of its People Plan 2024-27 utilising a proven and reliable service.

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## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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14. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and is contained in Appendix A.

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### **Staff Implications**

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15. Qualitative and quantitative feedback including Apprenticeship outcomes demonstrates that this training approach remains effective and provides staff with excellent development input.
16. Continued delivery will further ensure that key learning remains effectively aligned to the Service's Leadership Message, Values and the Core Code of Ethics for Fire & Rescue Services.

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### **Legal Implications**

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17. The route to market is compliant with the Authority's Contract Standing Orders and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and has been approved by the Head of Procurement.

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

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18. The total potential cost of this contract is £432,000 and reflects workforce planning estimates across recruitment and ongoing development of existing staff.
19. The costs for the learning and development programme is incorporated into existing staff training and development budgets.

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

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20. All training provision is covered by appropriate risk assessments.
21. Delivery of training supports the development and performance of staff, ensuring they understand Authority expectations and build key skills needed for their roles.

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### **Environmental Implications**

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22. In order to limit environment impact, travel arrangements will be made in accordance with the Authority's Travel Hierarchy and Making Travel Arrangements Service Instruction.
23. Brathay Trust Ltd aim to reduce environmental impact by integrating nature connectivity into their programmes, participating in local reforestation and adopting sustainable practices at their residential centre.

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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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24. The training provisions detailed will develop staff and enable them to effectively deliver against functional and corporate objectives, providing them with valuable knowledge, skills and behaviours that supports the achievement of the Authority's Vision and purpose.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**NONE**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**MFRA** Merseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **A**uthority

**MFRS** Merseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **S**ervice

**ITT** Invitation To Tender

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Overview Details			
<b>Function /Department</b>	<b>Ops Preparedness - POD</b>	<b>Date Of analysis</b>	<b>05.02.26</b>
<b>Title and overview of what is being assessed / considered</b>	Provision for residential training at Brathay Trust	<b>Review Date</b>	19.11.29 in line with the contract
<b>Who will be affected by this activity?</b> (Grey & Green Book)		Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Author of Equality Impact Analysis</b>	Ashley Roberts	<b>Equality Analysis quality assured by (Member of the POD team)</b>	Vicky Campbell

The purpose of undertaking an equality impact analysis and assessment is to understand the potential and/or actual impact that a service or policy may have on protected groups within the Equality Act (2010). The protected groups are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and / or belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation
- Socio-economic disadvantage (Although not one of the 9 protected groups MFRA recognise that Socio-economic disadvantage affects many deprived communities within Merseyside.)

People who are protected from discrimination on the basis of any of these characteristics are described in this document as belonging to one or other "protected group". In addition, equality analysis can be applied to groups of people not afforded protection by the Equality Act, but who often face disadvantage and stigma in life in general and when trying to access services & employment opportunities. Such groups include

homeless people, sex workers, people who misuse drugs and other groups who experience socio economic disadvantage and others. This template has been developed following consultation with staff and other external stakeholders including reference to the National Fire Chiefs Councils (NFCC) [equality impact assessment toolkit](#) as well as the [Maturity Models and Workforce Good Practice Frameworks](#) developed by the NFCC which MFRS will use to underpin EIAs as wider work on improvement.

### Impact Analysis

1	<p><b>What evidence have you used to think about any potential impact on particular groups?</b> (Please highlight any evidence that you have considered to help you address what the potential impact may be)</p> <p><b>Example evidence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ONS Census data</li> <li>• Regional or local demographic information</li> <li>• MFRS reports &amp; data</li> <li>• NFCC Reports/Guidance</li> <li>• Home office/Local government Reports</li> <li>• Risk Assessments</li> <li>• Staff survey results</li> <li>• Research / epidemiology studies</li> <li>• Updates to legislation</li> <li>• Engagement records or analysis</li> </ul> <p><b>NFCC Equality of Access documents</b> – We encourage you to click on the following <a href="#">link</a> to access a series of ‘equality of access documents’, developed by the National Fire Service Council (NFCC) &amp; reference the data and information highlighted.</p> <p>Some aspects of these documents will help you provide information, awareness, and data to support:</p>	<p>The purpose of this is EIA is to assess for the potential of any impact against the protected groups as described in the Equality Act (2010) in relation to the provision of residential development training delivered at Brathay Trust residential activity centre. The training supports Firefighter development through leadership, teamwork, communication and behavioural skills training delivered through outdoor and experiential learning activities. The programme involves staff attending and residing overnight at an external training provider.</p> <p>In addition to FF development, Brathay also provide Leadership development training as part of the Service’s leadership development provision.</p> <p>Evidence used includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NFCC Equality of Access to Employment and Training guidance</li> <li>• Previous residential training course feedback and evaluation forms</li> <li>• Service Instruction 0863 – Quiet Rooms and wellbeing support</li> <li>• MFRS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report and workforce data</li> <li>• Apprenticeship learner feedback and progress reviews</li> <li>• Risk assessments completed by Brathay Trust for accommodation, catering and activities</li> <li>• Staff survey feedback relating to accessibility and training provision</li> <li>• Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty requirements</li> <li>• Brathay Trust accessibility statements and inclusion policies</li> <li>• Occupational Health and reasonable adjustment guidance</li> <li>• Access to Work and disability workplace support guidance</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Risk Management Plans</li> <li>• Service delivery strategies</li> <li>• Positive action and recruitment plans</li> <li>• Workforce improvement plans</li> <li>• Community engagement activities</li> <li>• and, will prompt conversations within the workplace.</li> </ul> <p>Each document provides a significant amount of data and information, including research undertaken and risk-based evidence, and then goes into some ideas for actions which Services can use based on the information and their individual circumstances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-economic considerations identified through workforce demographic data and apprentice entry routes</li> </ul>	
2	<p><b>Do you have all the evidence you need in order to make an informed decision about the potential impact?</b> (Please tick)</p>	<p><b>Yes</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If you feel that you have enough evidence, then you will <b>not</b> need to undertake any engagement activity</p>	<p><b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If you feel that you do not have enough evidence to make an informed decision then you <b>will need to</b> undertake engagement activity with the staff or members of the public as applicable</p>

<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>What engagement is taking place or has already been undertaken to understand any potential impact on staff or members of the public?</b></p> <p>Examples include:</p> <p><u>Public</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Public Forums</li> <li>• Complaints, comments, compliments</li> </ul> <p><u>Staff</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff events / workshop</li> <li>• Existing staff meetings / committees</li> <li>• Staff Networks</li> <li>• Representative Bodies</li> <li>• Annual Staff Survey questions</li> </ul>	<p>Consultation has taken place with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• POD Managers</li> <li>• Operational Training Managers</li> <li>• Apprenticeship Delivery Team</li> <li>• Training instructors delivering residential elements</li> <li>• Brathay Trust delivery staff regarding accessibility, welfare and reasonable adjustment processes</li> <li>• Informal learner feedback from previous residential leadership and development courses</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Will there be an impact against the protected groups as described in the Equality Act (2010)?</b></p> <p>Summarise what impact there may be against each of the protected groups. Embed or provide a hyperlink to any reports or electronic files to which you are referring.</p> <p>Please remember when considering any possible impacts, these may be <b>positive or negative</b> and that there may be different impacts for our own staff when compared to those possible impacts on members of the community. Please detail clearly if the impacts are for staff or the wider community.</p> <p>It is also important to note that there may not be an impact on some of the protected groups if this</p>	<p>What is the <b>actual</b> or <b>potential</b> impact on <b>age</b>? courses may include staff of varying ages.</p> <p>Potential positive impact includes enhanced development opportunities and engagement through experiential learning methods.</p> <p>Potential negative impacts may arise where activities involve physical challenge or unfamiliar residential environments which may affect individuals differently depending on fitness levels or personal circumstances.</p> <p>Activities are risk assessed and alternative learning methods can be provided where required.</p>	<p><b>Not applicable</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

should be the case please tick the not applicable box.  
  
If there is **no impact**, please state that there is no impact.

**What is the actual or potential impact on disability?**  
Residential and outdoor activity-based training may present barriers for staff with physical disabilities, neurodiversity, sensory impairments or long-term health conditions.

Positive impacts include increased confidence, team integration and inclusive development opportunities.

Potential negative impacts include accessibility of accommodation, activity suitability, travel requirements and fatigue associated with residential stays.

These risks are mitigated through:

- Pre-course medical and welfare disclosure
- Individual reasonable adjustment planning
- Liaison with Brathay Trust regarding accessible accommodation and activity modification
- Occupational Health and consideration through the Reasonable Adjustment Panel to consider support where required
- Availability of alternative activities or assessment methods

**Not applicable**

**What is the actual or potential impact on gender reassignment?**  
Accommodation provided are all single occupancy with private changing/wash facilities.

Potential risks include:

**Not applicable**

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privacy concerns in accommodation</li> <li>• Participation confidence in mixed-gender activity environments</li> </ul> <p>These are mitigated through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation of suitable accommodation arrangements</li> <li>• Welfare support and instructor awareness</li> <li>• Access to wellbeing facilities and support guidance</li> <li>• Consideration of individual needs prior to attendance</li> </ul>	
		<p>What is the <b>actual</b> or <b>potential</b> impact on <b>marriage and civil partnership</b>?</p>	<p><b>Not applicable</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
		<p>What is the <b>actual</b> or <b>potential</b> impact on <b>pregnancy and maternity</b>? In relation to pregnancy and maternity risk assessment will to be put in place to assess how the individual could participate. Involvement in activities can be adapted to ensure they can participate. Additional private room can be made available should breastfeeding be required.</p>	<p><b>Not applicable</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
		<p>What is the <b>actual</b> or <b>potential</b> impact on <b>race</b>?</p>	<p><b>Not applicable</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
		<p>What is the <b>actual</b> or <b>potential</b> impact on <b>religion and / or belief</b>? Residential training may require overnight stays and accommodation which could impact individuals with specific religious or cultural requirements.</p> <p>Potential considerations include:</p>	<p><b>Not applicable</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dietary requirements</li> <li>• Prayer facilities or time allowances</li> <li>• Modesty or accommodation arrangements</li> </ul> <p>Brathay Trust provides catering options and flexible arrangements where notified in advance. Staff are encouraged to disclose requirements confidentially prior to attendance.</p>	
		<p>What is the <b>actual</b> or <b>potential</b> impact on <b>sex (gender)</b>? The residential environment requires shared accommodation and participation in physically and socially challenging activities.</p> <p>Positive impacts include inclusive team development and leadership confidence building.</p> <p>Potential risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privacy concerns in accommodation</li> <li>• Participation confidence in mixed-gender activity environments</li> <li>• Menopause-related wellbeing considerations</li> </ul> <p>These are mitigated through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation of suitable accommodation arrangements</li> <li>• Welfare support and instructor awareness</li> <li>• Access to wellbeing facilities and support guidance</li> <li>• Consideration of individual needs prior to attendance</li> </ul>	<p><b>Not applicable</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
		<p>What is the <b>actual</b> or <b>potential</b> impact on <b>sexual orientation</b>?</p>	<p><b>Not applicable</b></p>

		<p>Potential risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privacy concerns in accommodation</li> </ul> <p>These are mitigated through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation of suitable accommodation arrangements</li> <li>• Welfare support and instructor awareness</li> <li>• Access to wellbeing facilities and support guidance</li> <li>• Consideration of individual needs prior to attendance</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<p>What is the <b>actual</b> or <b>potential</b> impact on <b>Socio-economic disadvantage</b>?</p> <p>Residential courses may create perceived barriers for individuals with caring responsibilities or external financial pressures.</p> <p>All accommodation, meals, course costs and travel are covered by the Service, reducing financial barriers. Managers will support staff with planning around caring or family responsibilities were reasonably practicable.</p>	<p><b>Not applicable</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/>

## **ACTION PLAN**

<b>What actions need to be taken in order to mitigate the impacts identified in sections 3,4 and 5?</b>				
<b>Impact</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Integrated existing work (yes/no) outline</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Age	None			
Disability -	Ensure pre-course accessibility and reasonable adjustment questionnaires are completed and reviewed. Liaise with Brathay Trust to confirm accessibility arrangements and alternative activity options	Yes – aligned to Service reasonable adjustment processes.	Prior to each residential course delivery.	POD
Pregnancy and Maternity -	Ensure risk assessments are completed for pregnant staff or those returning from maternity. Confirm suitability of activities and residential arrangements. Provide alternative learning options where required.	Yes – aligned to SI 0863 and maternity support guidance.	Prior to each residential course delivery.	POD
Race	None			
Gender reassignment	None			
Marriage and civil partnership	None			
Religion and / or belief	Yes Gather dietary, prayer and accommodation requirements during pre-course planning and communicate these to Brathay Trust.	Yes – existing learner welfare and booking processes.	Prior to each residential course delivery.	POD
Sex (gender)	No. individual accommodation is to be booked	Yes – aligned with EDI and welfare policies.		
Sexual orientation	None			
Carers	None			
Other	None			
Deprived communities/socio economic	None			
<b>How will these actions be monitored and where will the outcomes be reported?</b>				



Post-course learner feedback and evaluation reports

- Welfare or reasonable adjustment review meetings
- Annual EDI monitoring and training quality review processes

<b>Completed by</b> (Please print name /Designation)	Ashley Roberts	<b>Signature</b> <b>Date</b>	A Roberts 05.02.25
<b>Quality Assured by</b> (Please print name /Designation)	Vicky Campbell	<b>Signature</b> <b>Date</b>	05.02.2026

<b>Name of responsible SLT member</b> (Please print name /Designation)		<b>Signature</b> <b>Date</b>	
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## Bibliography and Guidance documents

This bibliography provides details of all the documents and reports included within this EIA or the EIA guidance. The bibliography will also include Hyperlinks to other useful documents, reports, data, and webinars on our portal page or links direct to the websites which you may find helpful when completing your EIA. **Please note, that this is a live document, do not use an old copy of this form to complete a new EIA. Please ensure that you download a new copy from the portal, as the bibliography and links will be updated regularly to ensure you have access to the most recent data, articles and training.**

### Documents referenced and hyperlinked within the form

National Fire Chiefs Councils (NFCC) [equality impact assessment template](#)

National Fire Chiefs Councils (NFCC) [Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit](#)

National Fire Chiefs Councils (NFCC) [Maturity Models and Workforce Good Practice Frameworks](#)

This document provides insight into the NFCC Maturity model and provides guidance on the following areas:

- Leadership Development
- Recruitment
- Learning Organisation
- Blended Learning
- Performance Management
- Employee Recognition
- Talent Management
- EDI
- Well Being
- HR Analytics

### [Equality Diversity & Inclusion Resource Library](#)

The ED&I resources Library is located on the ED&I portal page and provides a suite of documents (detailed below) from a wide variety of sources, they may be internally produced reports or guidance, toolkits or data produced by the NFCC or partners. A list of the documents can be found below or you can access the complete library [here](#).

Disability related support including:

- [AFSA - Lets talk workplace disability](#)



Gender Related Resources including:

- [Fast Facts for patients – Menopause](#)

Pregnancy and Maternity Related Resources

Religion and Belief related resources including:

- [AFSA – 2021 Workforce Religion and belief Toolkit](#)

Sexual Orientation Related Resources

[AFSA Workforce Positive Action Toolkit](#)

[Dementia Friendly Emergency Services Guidance](#)

[NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment](#) which includes:

- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Actions for the Vulnerable Rehoused Homeless
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for Black Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for Neurodiversity
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for LGBT Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for People from Asian Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for the Roma Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for People Living with Dementia
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for People Living in Rural Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for Emerging Migrant Communities
- NFCC Community Risk – CRMP Equality Impact Assessment

These can also be found on the [NFCC website](#)

### **NFCC Toolkits**

The NFCC have also created a number of toolkits to provide help and guidance these can be found here on the [NFCC website](#) or via the links below in the ED&I Resource Library

The toolkits currently available include:

- [Collecting and Disseminating of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Data Toolkit](#)

- [Gender Diversity Toolkit](#)
- [Neurodiversity Toolkit](#)
- [Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit](#)
- [Staff Networks Toolkit](#)

### **Webinars**

[NFCC Lunch and Learns](#) which include

- Neurodiversity
- Trans Visibility in FRS
- Racial Equality
- Bite Size techniques to avoid burnout
- Being part of the LGBT Community

### **Other useful Links and documents**

[ED&I Annual Report](#) this report included our Staffing data, Gender and BAME Pay Gap analysis and recent reporting against our 5 Equality Objectives

[Diversity Events Calendar](#) the diversity calendar is helpful to understand what key dates are taking place throughout the year to assist with community engagement

[Knowing our Communities Data](#) this is a suite of documents, which provides data within each of the local Authorities, by different protected groups which include Age, Disability, Religion and Ethnicity.

### **[Service Instruction 0877 Resources to support managers and staff to implement the Equality & Diversity Policy](#)**

- [Appendix 1 - Disability in the workplace information for staff and managers](#)
- [Appendix 2 - Reasonable Adjustments Support for staff & managers in the workplace](#)
- [Appendix 3 - Access to Work Support for staff and managers in the workplace](#)
- [Appendix 4 - Supporting people with Dyslexia in the workplace](#)
- [Appendix 5 - Supporting Staff during the Menopause](#)
- [Appendix 6 - Guidance for supporting employees returning from maternity; breastfeeding in the workplace Operational Firefighters](#)
- [Appendix 7 - Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender \(LGBT\) staff in the Workplace](#)
- [Appendix 8 - Supporting Transgender staff in the Workplace](#)
- [Appendix 9 - Neurodiversity in the workplace](#)



[2021/22 Fire Statistics](#) this includes workforce data published by the government