

**To: All Members of the Community Safety and
Protection Committee
(and any other Members who may wish to attend)**



**J. Henshaw
LLB (Hons)
Clerk to the Authority**

Tel: 0151 296 4000
Extn: 4112 Helen Peek

Your ref:

Our ref HP/NP

Date: 15 October 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **COMMUNITY SAFETY AND
PROTECTION COMMITTEE** to be held at **1.00 pm** on **THURSDAY, 23RD
OCTOBER, 2014** in the Temporary Meeting Room at Merseyside Fire and Rescue
Service Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle.

***Please note, there will be a Learning Lunch for Members at 12:00, prior to the
meeting, regarding the successes of the Firefit Hub.***

Access will be provided to members of the press and public from 12:45.

Yours faithfully,



Clerk to the Authority

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE

23 OCTOBER 2014

AGENDA

Members

Linda Maloney (Chair)
Robbie Ayres
John Kelly
Jimmy Mahon
Barbara Murray
Steve Niblock
Tony Robertson
Roy Gladden

1. Preliminary matters

Members are requested to consider the identification of:

- a) declarations of interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda
- b) any additional items of business which the Chair has determined should be considered as matters of urgency; and
- c) items of business which may require the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof because of the possibility of the disclosure of exempt information.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 4)

The Minutes of the Previous Meeting, held on 29th July 2014, are submitted for approval as a correct record and for signature by the committee chair.

3. IRMP Supplement 2015-17 (Pages 5 - 48)

To consider Report CFO/108/14 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning the content of 2015/17 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Supplement subject to a period of 12 weeks consultation prior to implementation.

4. OPERATIONAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY 2014/15 (Pages 49 - 64)

To consider Report CFO/110/14 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning the operational recruitment strategy for 2014/15 and endorsement of the proposed contractual terms to be applied.

5. JCC UPDATE (Pages 65 - 92)

To consider Report CFO/109/14 of the Deputy Chief Executive, concerning progress in relation to the works on the Joint Command and Control Centre (JCC).

This Report contains EXEMPT information, by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

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

Refreshments

Any Members attending on Authority business straight from work or for long periods of time, and require a sandwich, please contact Democratic Services, prior to your arrival, for arrangements to be made.

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE

29 JULY 2014

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Roy Gladden and Dave Hanratty

Also Present: Linda Maloney, Robbie Ayres, John Kelly, Barbara Murray, Steve Niblock and Les Byrom

Apologies of absence were received from: Cllr Jimmy Mahon, Cllr Tony Newman and Cllr Tony Robertson

1. Preliminary matters

Members considered the identification of declarations of interest, any urgent additional items, and any business that may require the exclusion of the press and public.

Resolved that:

- a) no declarations of interest were made by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda
- b) Item 5, report CFO/085/14 Change of Lead Members Roles, be accepted by the Chair as a matter of urgency to enable the Authority to appointment a replacement Lead Member for Prevention and Protection, and complete membership of Performance & Scrutiny Committee, prior to that Committee's first meeting of the municipal year, due to the Chair receiving verbal notice, of the resignation to that role by Councillor Newman; and
- c) no items of business required the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof because of the possibility of the disclosure of exempt information.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous Community Safety & Protection Committee, held on 27th March 2014, were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

3. Wirral Youth Zone

(CFO/048/14)

Members considered report CFO/048/14 Wirral Youth Zone, of the Deputy Chief Executive, requesting confirmation of a previous decision to transfer land freed up at the Birkenhead fire station site to support the creation of a Youth Zone.

Members welcomed the idea, which they felt is in line with the Fire and Rescue Authority's aims and direction of travel.

Members requested that congratulations be passed on to Sarah Lawton, Project Manager of the Firefit Hub, for being awarded 'Woman of the Year'. The Chair recommended that any Members who have not visited the Hub, attend the 1 year anniversary event being hosted on Friday 1st August.

Resolved that:

- a. The transfer of land in principle, to support the Youth Zone, be agreed subject to:-
 - i. The setup of an appropriate company.
 - ii. The project funding be finalised and the Business Plan staying broadly in line with that detailed within Appendix A to the report.
 - iii. A lease being agreed. This being based on a peppercorn rent.
 - iv. A finalised agreement being reached on how the fire station and Youth Zone will work closely together on the shared visions and aims around youth engagement and support.
 - v. The provision of a designated Youth Engagement space being created for Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service within the Youth Zone.
- b. The Chair of the Authority write a letter of appreciation and congratulations, on behalf of all Members, to Sara Lawton in recognition of being awarded 'Woman of the Year' and to express how proud the Authority are.

4. CFOA Road Safety Week

(CFO/083/14)

Members considered report CFO/083/14 of the Chief Fire Officer regarding the background to, and activity carried out by MFRA staff during the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) Road Safety Week 9th June to 15th June 2014.

The DCFO highlighted the national work of CFOA, particularly CFO Dave Etheridge following the motion made by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority to support Mrs Frances Molloy's campaign against vehicles being fitted with old tyres, following the road traffic incident where a coach fitted with tyres older than the vehicle itself, crashed resulting in the fatality of her son, the coach driver and one other passenger also died travelling home from the Bestival festival.

Resolved that:

- vi. The contents of this report and the contribution this activity has to the reduction of those killed or seriously injured on the roads as a result of being in a road traffic collision, be noted
- vii. Whilst those killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions is reducing, the numbers of those pedestrians and cyclists killed or seriously injured in Merseyside has been rising for the last 3 years, be noted
- viii. Members appreciation to Officers for their support in relation to all road safety work with partners, to Liverpool Walton MP Steve Rotheram and CFOA for backing the campaign against vehicles being fitted with old tyres for use on the roads and carrying passengers, be recorded.

5. Change of Lead Members Roles

Members considered report CFO/085/14 of the Clerk to the Authority regarding a Change of Lead Member Roles.

Members noted that the change in Lead Members will have a knock on affect and membership of committee's will be updated to reflect the appropriate Members to the appropriate committees.

Resolved that:

- a) Nomination of Councillor Stapleton to the FireFit Hub Board and the Board of Fire Support Network be approved, and
- b) The change in Lead Member for Prevention and Protection to Councillor Gladden be approved.
- c) Appreciation to Councillor Newman for his contribution to the Authority in his previous capacity of Lead Member, be recorded.

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 23 October 2014

Signed:_____

Date:_____

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	23 OCTOBER 2014	REPORT NO:	CFO/108/14
PRESENTING OFFICER	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DEB APPLETON	REPORT AUTHOR:	JACKIE SUTTON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP		
TITLE OF REPORT:	IRMP SUPPLEMENT 2015-17		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	IRMP SUPPLEMENT 2015-17
	APPENDIX B:	EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members approve the content of 2015/17 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Supplement subject to a period of 12 weeks consultation prior to implementation. (Appendix A).

Recommendation

2. That Members approve the content of the 2015/17 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Supplement subject to a period of 12 weeks' consultation prior to implementation.

Introduction and Background

3. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 via the National Framework contains the legal requirement to produce an IRMP. The primary objective for this process is to make each Fire & Rescue Authority (FRA) more responsive to locally identified risk and needs and better able to deliver safer communities.
4. Merseyside FRA's IRMP is a medium term plan that evaluates progress made as a result of previous IRMPs and captures future aspirations and the strategic direction for the Authority in order to deliver its Mission; Safer Stronger Communities; Safe, Effective Firefighters;
5. Members will be aware that the published IRMP 2013/16 is still current. However due to the Government having confirmed the extent of the cuts for 2015/16 it was considered more appropriate to publish a Supplement to the existing IRMP 2013/16 covering a 2 year period 2015/17. Members are therefore asked to approve a Supplement to the existing IRMP being published. The supplement is attached to this report at Appendix A.

6. The outcome of the 12 week consultation will be reported back to the Authority following the consultation period. The draft IRMP Supplement for 2015/17 addresses the difficult decisions required to meet budget challenges including station mergers and closures. It also builds on progress made over the last ten years and is very firmly focussed on maintaining the efficient and effective delivery of core services to Merseyside communities.
7. Following approval by Authority of the final IRMP Supplement the document will be sent for design and printing.

Equality and Diversity Implications

8. The existing Equality Impact Assessment for IRMP 2013/16 has been reviewed and updated. There are no new actions considered to impact on any protected groups. The equality impact assessment is attached Appendix B and details the way in which the plan's objectives impact differently on the protected groups identified in the 2010 Equality Act.

Staff Implications

9. The IRMP does have implications for staff in relation to the support service review, reducing the number of fire appliances and firefighters, changes to duty system, station mergers and closures. Any implications arising from the actions detailed in this report will be declared and dealt with as part of the delivery of these individual actions (as outlined in paragraph 9).

Legal Implications

10. This Report is the last stage of the process to fully discharge statutory duties placed upon the Authority to produce and publish an IRMP and Action Plan. Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 imposes a statutory duty on the Authority to have regard to the National Framework 2012 in carrying out its functions. The National Framework requires the Authority to put in place an Integrated Risk Management Plan.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

11. The full financial implications were established during the development of the IRMP proposals which have been designed to meet the cuts in Government grant. No alternative proposals were suggested during the consultation period that would still allow the Authority to meet their obligation to set a balanced budget.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

-
12. The IRMP details the strategic approach to risk management, encompassing what has been done to manage risk and what will be done in the coming three years.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

13. The IRMP is the primary way in which the Authority sets out how it will prepare for and respond to risk within its communities.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/074/13

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA **M**erseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **A**uthority is the physical and legal entity. When writing reports MFRA is the “object”.

IRMP Integrated Risk Management Plan

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APPENDIX A

**Safer, Stronger Communities
Safe, Effective Firefighters**

Integrated Risk Management Plan

SUPPLEMENT 2015—2017

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

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Introduction

Welcome to our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Supplement for 2015/17. This supplement outlines what we have done to minimise the impact of the cuts on the people of Merseyside and explains how we have continued to keep the safety of the public and the effectiveness of firefighters as our priority.

Fire and Rescue Authorities are required to produce a medium term plan that sets out the ways in which it will deal with local risks and challenges. We published our current three year IRMP in June 2013 and we are using this document to update our stakeholders on the progress we have made against our objectives for 2013/14 and how we intended to deal with any future challenges.

On top of £9.2 million of cuts to our budget between 2011 and 2013, we are required to make a further £6.3 million of savings before April 2015 with more cuts expected up until 2020. This presents the Authority with significant challenges as it seeks to minimise the impact of these cuts on the levels of service it provides to the public.

Merseyside has seen significant reductions in the total number of incidents over the last decade meaning that the demand for our emergency response has fallen. This is largely due to the success of our fire prevention and protection services (such as Home Fire Safety Checks) particularly focused on those people most at risk of suffering a fire. These interventions require significant resources. All of our firefighters and many non-operational front line staff carry out these services every day. We have also invested heavily to ensure the safety and effectiveness of our staff, ensuring that they undertake high quality training and are provided with the best equipment to do the

job. Despite the reduction in incident volumes, finding the savings isn't easy. To make savings of this magnitude without having an impact on fire stations and fire appliances is no longer possible, despite continued cuts to "back office" and support services, which includes the staff working to protect people in their own homes.

In previous IRMPs we have introduced the concept of a single Merseyside-wide 10 minute response standard (although the actual average response time is almost half that, at 5 minutes 24 seconds, giving Merseyside one of the fastest response times in the country).

Recent cuts have seen the Authority having to incrementally reduce the number of fire appliances from 42 to 28 over the period and we are (at the time of writing) consulting on proposals to close pairs of outdated stations and where possible, replace them with one new community fire station in a more central location. Feedback so far suggests that the public, businesses and partner organisations understand our reasons for doing this and are supportive; recognising that we would not be making many of these changes if we were not compelled to do so.

More hard decisions will no doubt follow if the Government continues to cut public spending. So far, we have managed to maintain a very fast response and by targeting our prevention activity and working smarter, we are still having a real impact on the safety of Merseyside.

You can be assured that despite significant changes we will continue to provide the best possible service to the public of Merseyside.

Chief Fire Officer Dan Stephens
Chair of the Fire Authority Cllr Dave Hanratty

Our Mission & Aims

Our Mission; to achieve:

Safer, Stronger Communities—Safe Effective Firefighters

Our Aims;

Excellent Operational Preparedness

We will provide our firefighters with the training, information, procedures and equipment to ensure they can safely and effectively resolve all emergency incidents.

Excellent Operational Response

We will maintain an excellent emergency response to meet risk across Merseyside with safety and effectiveness at its core.

Excellent Prevention and Protection

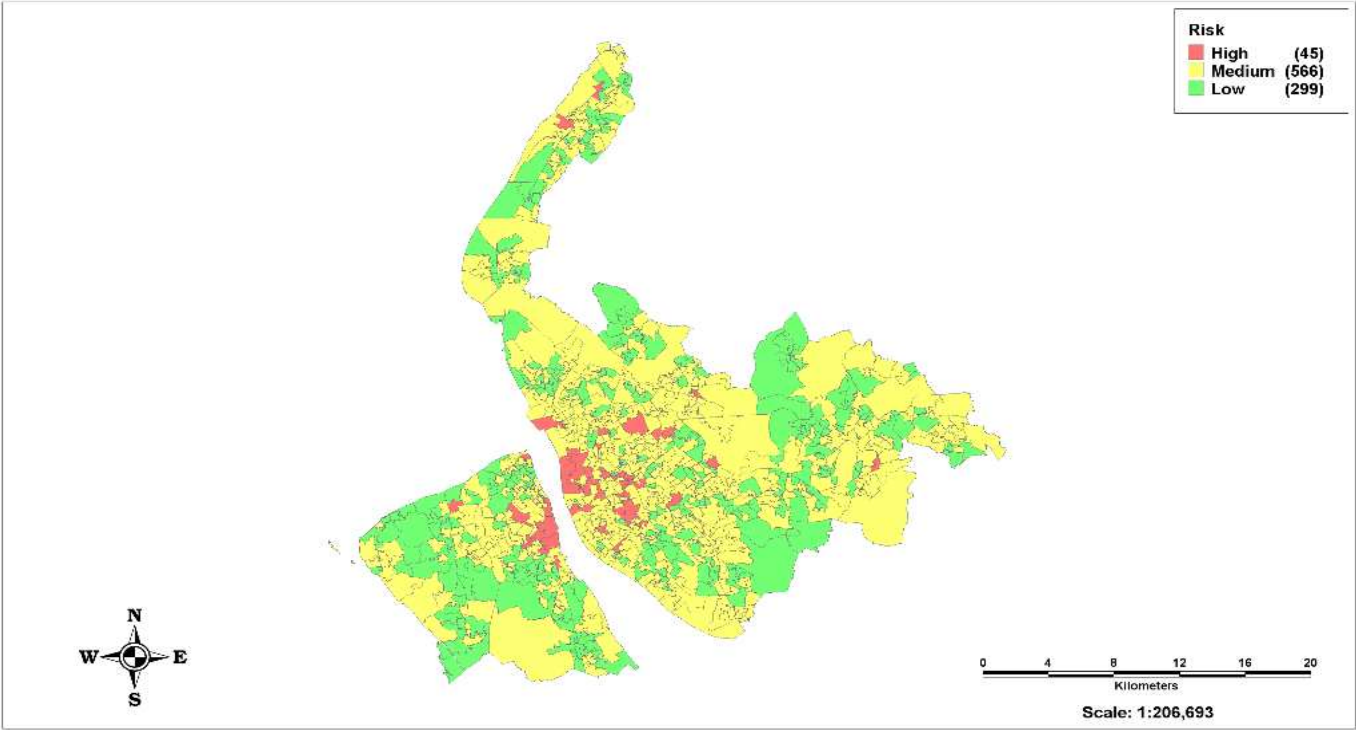
We will work with our partners and our community to protect the most vulnerable through targeted local risk reduction interventions and the robust application of our legal powers.

Excellent People

We will develop and value all our employees, respecting diversity, promoting opportunity and equality for all.

Risk Map of Merseyside 2014

The MFRA approach to identifying and reducing risk examines where emergencies occur and the factors that have the greatest impact on risk to life for the people of Merseyside. Allowing us to respond efficiently and effectively, where an emergency does occur, and intelligently target the individual needs of our communities. Maps are created to illustrate the areas where risk factors are most concentrated. The red areas contain some of the most hard to reach and high risk residents of Merseyside. To develop these maps we use data sets including the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, local information from partners who share data with us and historical response data. All this information is collated to produce the Risk Map below:



Risk Map 2015

Author: Gary Crobble
Date: 24.04.2014
Produced Using: MapInfo v11.0
Strategy and Performance

File Reference: K:\Systems_Support\IRM\Risk Methodology Data\Risk Map Data 01042011_31032014\MapInfo\RiskMap 2015_NoMapbase_Land.png

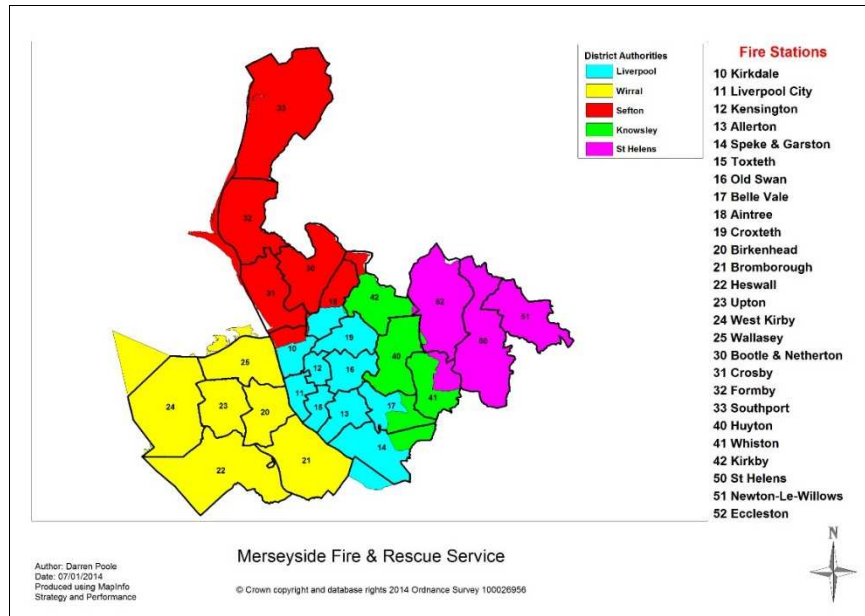
© Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100026956

Our Communities

Merseyside has a population of 1.4 million residents and spans 249 square miles (645 Km²) and is made up of five Districts:

- Liverpool
- Wirral
- Sefton
- Knowsley
- St Helens

The map shows where our Fire Stations are currently located (October 2014).



Mid 2013 estimated figures showed Merseyside had a population total of 1,386,589 which is a 0.39 % increase on the 2011 Census population. The last

Census in 2011 showed the population is split into 48.6% males and 51.4% females. Merseyside has a lower proportion of children (16.5%) and higher proportions of working age residents (66.3%) and older people (17.2%) than the North West averages. (*Census 2011*)

Ethnicity

(*Census 2011 data*)

Ethnicity	Merseyside	%
White	1,305,303	94.5%
Mixed	20954	1.6%
Black and Black British	14552	1%
Asian and Asian British	18851	1.4%
Chinese and Other	21529	1.5%
Total	1,381,189	100.00%

Age

Children and people over pension age make up over 34% of the population of Merseyside (*Census 2011*)

Age	Merseyside	%
0-14	228,290	16.5%
15-64	915,042	66.3%
65+	237,857	17.2%
Total	1,381,189	100.00%

Our Districts

Wirral

Population: 320,295

Households: 142,197

Key Risks include:-

- M53 Motorway
- Wallasey & Birkenhead Tunnels
- River Mersey & Coastal risks
- Clatterbridge & Arrowe Park Hospitals
- COMAH Top Tier Sites
- Underground & Overground Railways

Sefton

Population: 273,207

Households: 121,072

Key Risks include:-

- M57 & M58 Motorways
- Dock & Freeport complex
- National Trust & English Heritage Coastline
- RAF Base & Altcar Rifle Range & Barracks
- Southport Hospital
- Merseyrail track to Southport

Liverpool

Population: 470,780

Households: 199,743

Key Risks include:-

- John Lennon Airport
- Dock Estate & River Mersey
- Liverpool One Shopping Centre & City Centre
- Liverpool, Hope & Liverpool John Moores Universities
- Royal Liverpool, Broadgreen, Aintree, Walton Neurological & Alder Hey Hospitals
- Anfield & Goodison Football Stadia

St Helens

Population: 176,221

Households: 78,014

Key Risks include:-

- M6 & M62 Motorways
- East Lancashire Road
- Rail links & canals
- St Helens Hospital
- St Helens Rugby Ground

Knowsley

Population: 146,086

Households: 63,171

Key Risks include:-

- M57 & M62 motorways
- Rail links
- Top Tier COMAH Sites
- Large Industrial Estates
- Whiston Hospital

Our Financial Challenge

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority made £19.2m of savings to deliver a balanced budget between 2011/12 – 2014/15. The major saving required in the front line service was a reduction of front line fire engines from 42 to 28.

The Government has now announced the settlement figure for 2015/16 and an indicative estimate for 2016/17. This further funding reduction means that over the next two years the Fire Authority will need to make savings of £6.3m to balance the financial plan. To deliver these savings the Authority have prepared a comprehensive plan which will deliver further savings from Back Office and Support Staff of £2.9m. This has placed a large number of non-uniformed staff at risk of redundancy. Many of these posts provide front line services to the community notably within Prevention and Protection.

This still leaves £3.4m of cuts to be identified from front line fire stations. The Chief Fire Officer examined the options for delivering the operational savings required including station mergers, closures, wholtime retained and community retained firefighters and identified station mergers as the 'least worst option'. Public consultation has endorsed this approach.

The financial plan at the time of setting the budget assumed that it will be possible to save £3.4m, equivalent to about 100 firefighter posts, through at least 4 station mergers. These include:

- ↳ Huyton & Whiston at Prescot
- ↳ Upton & West Kirby at Greasby
- ↳ Eccleston & St Helens at St Helens Town Centre
- ↳ A fourth merger in Liverpool District if suitable sites can be identified or outright closure if not

Based on current firefighter retirement profile to deliver that scale of saving will take until 2016. The Authority has always used natural turnover rates

from firefighters to make savings and to avoid compulsory redundancy in that part of its workforce.

Looking beyond 2015/16

Based on statements by all the major political parties about their strategies for dealing with the current position of the public finances it is anticipated that the financial climate will remain very tough for the Authority over the next few years, perhaps as long as to 2020, and further tough choices will be required over the next few years

Reserves

The Authority has prudently planned to meet financial risks over the medium term by holding reserves to be used:

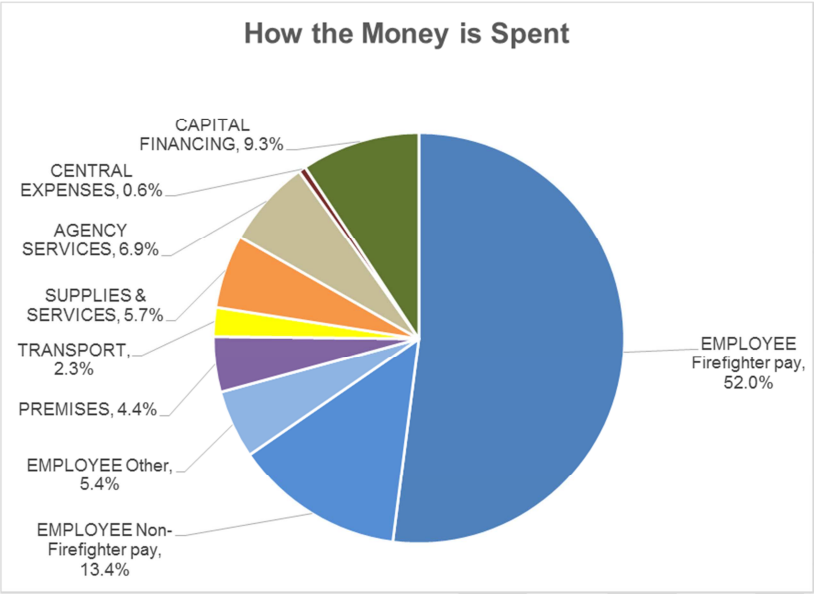
- ↳ To have monies available to give time to deliver savings through natural retirement of firefighters to avoid redundancy.
- ↳ As a hedge against pay rises and other risks in the short term as plans assume pay bill restraint.
- ↳ To support capital projects like station mergers to avoid borrowing.
- ↳ To manage limited recruitment.

Post 2015/16, balancing competing risks will become more difficult as the aim is to use much of the reserves for the proposed station mergers project to avoid additional borrowing costs.

Council tax

The Authority has assumed that it will be allowed to increase council tax levels in line with inflation in the next few years and has done so in recent budgets with increases at 2% in 2013/14 and 2014/15 which was below inflation in those years. The current council tax is £68.70. Which is equivalent to £1.32 per week for a band D household.

How our money is spent



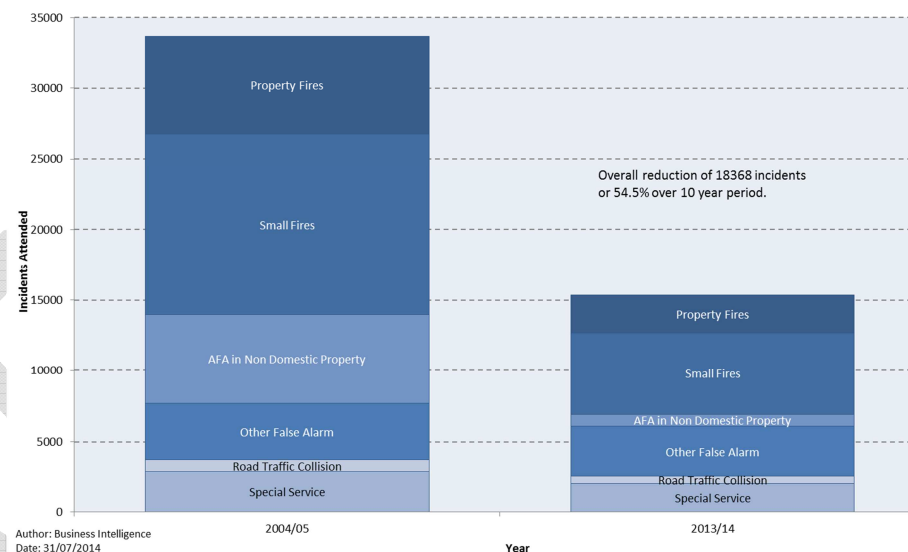
Our Performance

Despite the financial challenges Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority faces, we are committed to providing the best service possible to the people of Merseyside. Performance in all areas is consistently monitored through Key Performance Indicators (Outcomes) and Local Performance Indicators (Outputs) published in the annual Service Delivery Plan.

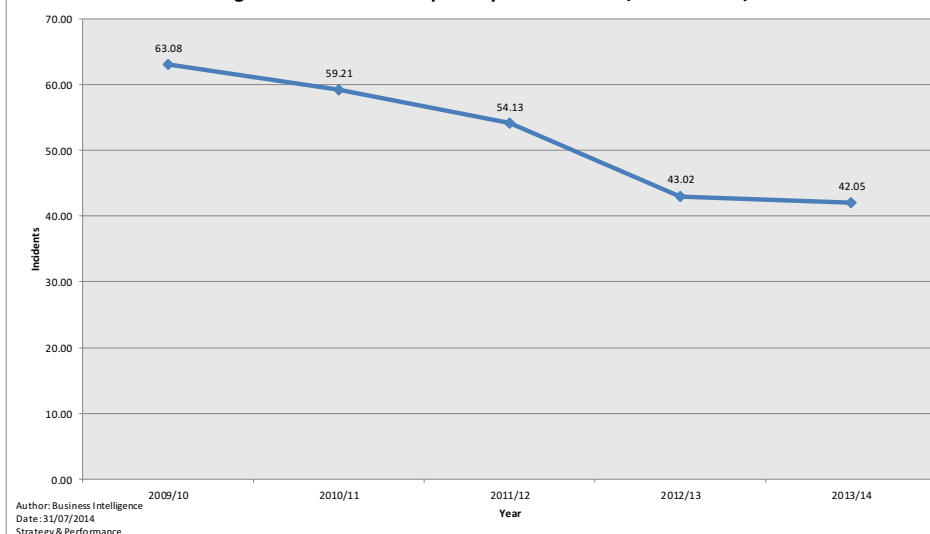
Targets for outcome related Key Performance Indicators are set using forecasting and historical data to reflect expected improvements to performance.

The illustrations to follow give a snapshot of MFRS performance to the end of March 2014.

Breakdown of Total Incidents Attended between 2004/05 and 2013/14



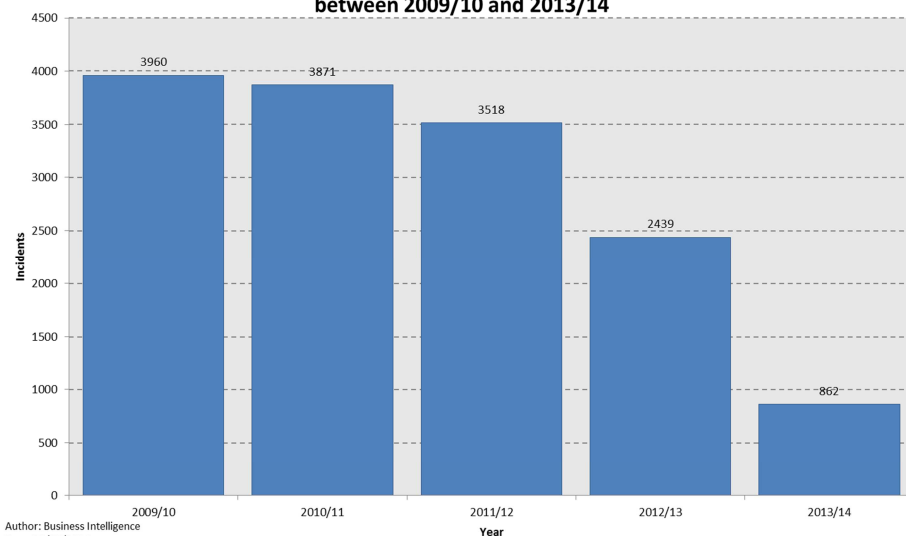
Average Incidents Attended per Day between 2009/10 and 2013/14



Overall incidents have been reduced by 54.5% over the 10 year period illustrated by the two charts. This is 18,368 incidents less in 2013/14 than in 2004/05. The largest reduction was in small anti-social behaviour fires. In 2004/05 12,785 small fire incidents were attended but by 2013/14 this had fallen to 5,755 incidents. Our work with partner agencies and the Youth Engagement work we undertake contribute to this massive reduction.

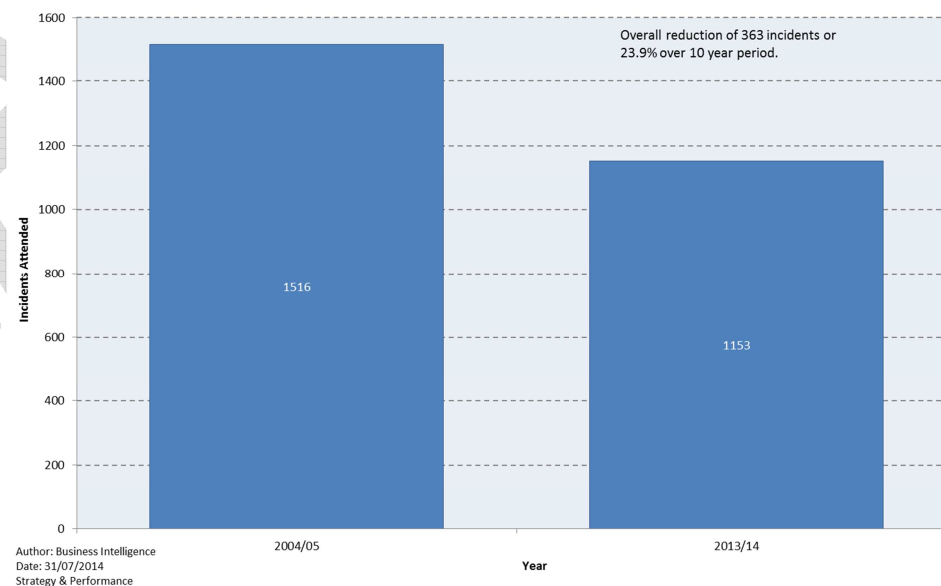
The number of Road Traffic Collisions attended have been reduced from 864 in 2004/05 to 514 in 2013/14. We continue to deliver road safety interventions to schools, colleges and any interested groups to educate residents about driver and pedestrian safety.

Automatic False Alarms in Non Domestic (including commercial premises) between 2009/10 and 2013/14



There were 363 fewer accidental dwelling fires in 2013/14 than in 2004/05. Home Fire Safety Checks have consistently reduced the number of accidental dwelling fires year on year. We continue to deliver this service but in a more targeted way. Through the use of our Vulnerable Person Index we are able to identify those most at risk of fire and deliver appropriate interventions. Re-assurance campaigns are delivered to specific areas following incidents.

Comparison of Accidental Dwelling Fires between 2004/05 and 2013/14



The Automatic Fire Alarm Strategy introduced in 2012 changed our approach to attending what we call Unwanted Fire Signals. To introduce this strategy we educated and informed owners of non-domestic properties about management of their fire alarm systems and the impact on our reducing resources when attending false alarms. In 2004/05 we attended 6,284 incidents while in 2013/14 we attended just 824 such incidents.

Excellent Operational Preparedness

Update on IRMP 2013-16 Actions

Standard Operational Procedures (SOP's) Review

Ensures Incident Commanders are provided with flexible local risk specific operational guidance aligned with national operational guidance. Local SOP's are produced to ensure that hazards presented by operational activity are identified and that guidance is available to the Incident Commander on how to control the associated risks and effectively resolve the incident.

Command and Control & Command Competence Training

Technical Command Assessment (TCA) applicants now complete an internal command training course prior to undertaking a TCA to ensure they have underpinning incident command knowledge. Command training and development is aligned to National Occupational Standards and the Qualifications & Credit Framework (QCF).

Safe Person Assessments

The Safe Person Assessments (SPA's) are now fully embedded within MFRS's assessment framework. Improved performance & efficiency at operational level can be directly linked back to SPA's. The reporting features allow Service Managers to accurately plan and forecast training and assessment in line with the training planner.

COMAH

Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) is managed through attendance at the COMAH Mets Forum, liaison with the Health & Safety Executive, consultation with partners regarding SEVESO III consultation document, COMAH site operators' quarterly forums and work with Network Rail & Merseyrail to develop Introduction to COMAH training packages for rail employees.

High Rise & other Local Infrastructure Changes

Our High Rise Project, will ensure any equipment provision and/or procedural requirements are aligned to the overall firefighting media strategy and national guidance.

Planned Developments

MFRS Operational Planning team use a variety of different methods to identify emerging issues including:

- Liaison with internal departments e.g. Protection— for identification of timber framed buildings.
- Local Resilience Forums e.g. Liverpool Super-Port, National Risk Register, MRF Community Risk Register, MRF Hazards & Risks Sub-Group.
- Quarterly meetings with Merseyrail & Network rail which have produced rail mapping for the appliance mobile data terminals.
- Links with John Lennon Airport Fire Service & Civil Aviation Authority.
- Attendance at planning meetings for major events on Merseyside e.g. Open Golf Championships, Giants visit and Southport Air show.

Equipment - MFRA continually reviews its firefighting tactics, media and equipment to ensure it learns from local and national events and keeps pace with technological innovations. This has included the introduction of:

- New cutting equipment & door rams for faster entry to buildings.
- Piercing branches & wall cutting equipment for suppression of compartment fires prior to firefighter entry.
- Improved Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) including Road Traffic Collision (RTC) gloves, personal issue respirators and fire kit.
- 300 bar cylinders & equipment for new breathing apparatus procedures in line with new guidance.
- New e-draulic heavy cutting/spreading equipment for RTC response.
- New Breathing Apparatus Support Unit vehicle
- Incident Command and Control Unit
- A specialist Hazmat Unit

The Authority continues to provide the highest quality Personal Protection Equipment and operational equipment for its workforce.

Excellent Operational Preparedness

PLANS FOR 2015 AND BEYOND

JESIP—National Resilience

The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) ended on 30th September 2014. Following that, there will be a JESIP transitional period from 1st October 2014 to March 2015 where a programme report will be completed. During this period the JESIP team will continue to work from the Home Office. The transition has been divided into a number of key workstreams: Doctrine, Training, Testing & Exercising and Joint Organisational Learning which will shape the legacy of JESIP.

From 1st April 2015 the JESIP legacy will commence and move from the Home Office to Cabinet Office and be supported by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat. Recommendations from the transition team will shape the JESIP legacy and there will continue to be a strategic board and ministerial oversight of JESIP. Work will continue with emergency services and Local Resilience Forums throughout transition and legacy arrangements to embed JESIP into business as usual activities.

A key branding change from 1st October is that JESIP will be known as Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles.

Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme

The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) is a cross-governmental programme to deliver mobile voice and data communications to the emergency services based on a review of the anticipated operational demands, technical opportunities and commercial options. The service delivered will be known as Emergency Services Network (ESN).

The FRS aspects of the programme including fire control and vehicle installation, data preparation, systems integration and migration planning form part of the ongoing activities whose timescales and funding mechanisms

have yet to be agreed by the Home Office. The system will potentially be the framework for FRS communications through to 2030 and beyond. Transition to the new service is expected to begin late 2016. The transition period for Merseyside FRS will begin late 2017.

Hazard and Risk Control Training

Hazard and risk control knowledge and understanding will be embedded within internal incident command input and training aligns to the guidance contained within the Health, Safety and Welfare Framework.

Command & Control / Command Competence Training

In alignment to the Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF) a programme of formative and assessable exercises will be provided to ensure incident command in all roles and levels is quality assured. Consistent and uniform assessment criteria for training and developmental purposes will be adopted.

Safe Person Assessments (SPA's)

Building on the success of the initial 20 SPA's we aim to provide additional assessments aligned to core training and risk critical activity. These will include Gas Tight Suits & Defibrillators. The enhanced level of reports will allow the training teams to analyse performance across the Service and react to the needs of the organisation. The software developed in house will also offer analysis across all core training courses.

High Rise & other local infrastructure changes

Preliminary research is being undertaken with a view to providing a high rise training rig at the Training and Development Academy in order to provide realistic training experiences.

MFRS is constantly horizon scanning to identify new & future risks. At present we are aware of the High speed 2 (HS2) rail link & the impact of increased rail traffic on Merseyside. We will identify training venues for operational personnel to utilise simulated rail incidents for familiarisation with rail procedures and interoperability with rail personnel.

Resilience

National Resilience Capabilities

Following the terrorist attacks in the USA on 11th September 2001 the Government of the day initiated the New Dimensions programme in order to improve national response arrangements to deal with similar events here in the UK.

The New Dimensions programme has resulted in the delivery of the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Conventional Explosive (CBRN (E)), High Volume Pumping (HVP) and Command and Control (C&C) capabilities. All of these capabilities are provided primarily for use at national incidents through discreet funding and support arrangements from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Merseyside FRS hosts a USAR team including 2 search dogs and handler, an Incident Response Unit for Mass Decontamination and a Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) vehicle which make up the CBRN (E) capability and a HVP. Whilst these assets are provided primarily for national deployment they are all utilised locally to enhance our response to incidents.

USAR and NWAS Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) station - Croxteth

The MFRS Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and North West Ambulance Services (NWAS) Liverpool Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) are co-located at Croxteth fire station in the only arrangement of its kind in the country.

The operational response to technical rescue incidents is significantly enhanced through this arrangement as the personnel from each team work

and train together using the facilities at the Training and Development Academy which is situated adjacent to the station.

JESIP—National Resilience

The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) was established to address the recommendations and findings from a number of major incident inquiries. The initial phase of the Programme ran from September 2012 to September 2014 with the aim of improving the ways in which police, fire and rescue and ambulance services work together at major and complex incidents.

This has been achieved through joint training and exercising and through the adoption of Joint Doctrine. Merseyside FRS officers supported the initial JESIP roll out and are now an integral aspect of the legacy arrangements which will serve to embed the JESIP principles as core business across the 3 emergency services.

Joint Command and Control Centre (JCC)

The Merseyside FRS Fire Control and Merseyside Police “999” call handling and dispatch capabilities are co-located on the ground floor of the JCC at the Merseyside FRS Headquarters.

The first floor of the JCC hosts the Merseyside FRS Operational Planning and Policy Team and the Merseyside Police Force Operations Department. It also hosts the strategic and tactical command suites from which all major incidents and events occurring on Merseyside are managed.

Excellent Operational Response

Update on IRMP 2013-16 Actions

New work routine

On 3rd January 2015 the duration of a firefighter's shifts were equalised in a move from 9 hour days and 15 hour nights to 12 hours days and nights. The new equalised shifts required a change to start and finish times. The duty system remains unchanged as a compressed hours system based upon 2 days and 2 nights worked consecutively, followed by 4 consecutive days off.

In conjunction with the shift change we introduced a new work routine for our firefighters that would maintain performance with fewer resources. The new work routine has reduced stand down time and increased the number of productive hours in the working day by six hours per firefighter for each 48 hour period or tour of duty. The work routine includes one hour per shift for physical training for station based operational personnel.

Reduction in the number of Appliances

Following the fundamental review of fire cover undertaken by the Chief Fire Officer, on 9th September 2013 the number of immediately available appliances was reduced from 42 to 28. This was a 33% cut.

10 minute response time

The introduction of the 10 minute response standard commenced in April 2013. Performance has been very high with an average of 97% achievement of the standard over the period. Where attendance times are not met these instances are reviewed by the relevant District Manager to improve performance or mitigate future occurrence.

Replace Dynamic Reserve with Strategic Resilience

The Authority has endeavoured to introduce wholtime retained strategic resilience appliances. In order to encourage staff to volunteer to undertake

these roles retained contracts have been advertised to staff at a higher remuneration rate and less hours cover required than that stipulated in Firefighter's National Conditions of Service. Unfortunately Staff uptake has been very poor and not at the level required to implement this change. The Authority continues to explore ways of implementing wholtime retained crewing.

Key station methodology

Ten key stations have been identified that form the basis of our tactical 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.

New fire stations and fire appliances

MFRA opened the last of the seven new Private Finance Initiative (PFI) stations in 2013. The stations boast state of the art facilities for our staff and for the community, making them true community fire stations which are accessible to all. The Fire Appliance Replacement Strategy means that our fire appliances are replaced every ten years to ensure they are fit for purpose and reflect improvements in safety and innovation.

Station Mergers

No fire stations have been closed to date, all 26 remain staffed with at least one fire engine although this position is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain due to the cuts applied and the resulting Authority decision to transition from 26 stations to 22 stations through mergers or outright closures.

Excellent Operational Response

PLANS FOR 2015 AND BEYOND

Shift pattern changes

Due to further financial pressures new, more efficient shift patterns and duty systems will continue to be considered. Whilst firefighter safety and productivity was increased by the changes made to the existing working patterns (2 days, 2 nights), a more efficient and effective shift system model may be able to increase safety and productivity further.

Non Operational duty systems

We will review non-operational duty/shift patterns to ensure ways of working compliment frontline service delivery and maximise the benefits of increased productivity delivered by changes to the default operational duty pattern.

New ways of crewing appliances

Whole-time and Community Retained will continue to be investigated as a way of providing additional resilience to supplement our whole-time workforce.

Additional Voluntary Hours (AVH)

The Service will continue to review its plans with regard to staffing in order to provide the most efficient and effective emergency response to Merseyside.

Flexi officer duty system review

The current Officers flexi duty system will be reviewed to ensure an appropriate number of operational officers available 24/7 for attending incidents; whilst ensuring we are maximising the managerial hours available in the workplace.

Develop & implement a comprehensive Fatigue Risk Management System (FRMS) - Following the realignment of shift times and the review of the work routines, the Authority will ensure that arrangement are in place to manage

the risk presented to operational Firefighters of fatigue in the workplace and review welfare at incidents if appliances have to remain in attendance longer due to less appliances being available.

To carry out a review of the current fire ground analytical risk assessment (ARA) process

We will ensure our ARA process it fully meets the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Service Framework and can be fully cross mapped to the outcomes of the Operational Procedure review. We will aim to develop a suitable ICT solution and methodology for this activity.

Command and Control at Incidents

We are reviewing the provision of Command Support to Incident Commanders. The Incident Management Team will be relocated to Toxteth fire station and move to a more efficient complimentary crewed system. To ensure we improve our Command Support resilience, we will train identified support stations in addition to Toxteth.

Station Mergers

Following consultation, the Authority has approved a proposal to merge of two fire stations in Knowsley (Huyton and Whiston) into one newly built, strategically situated site in Prescot. Mergers options are also being progressed in Wirral and St Helens, subject to public consultation. The merger solution is less viable in Liverpool, where the Authority has been forced to consider the outright closure of Allerton Fire Station in order to meet the required savings, again subject to public consultation.

Excellent Prevention and Protection

Update on IRMP 2013-16 Actions

Restructure of Prevention & Protection Team

The Prevention teams have been restructured at a District Level and at Service Headquarters. The restructure categorises Prevention into 4 key areas:

- Home Safety
- Road Safety
- Arson/Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)
- Children and Young People (CYP)

District based teams have been restructured and given the objective of reducing high levels of risk in homes and communities.

Managing risk

Each Policy for Prevention and Protection focuses on a risk based methodology which is being applied to ensure that front line resources are operating effectively in places and with people that are most vulnerable. This is reflected in the use of our Vulnerable Person Index to target risk in the home based on factors we know make people more vulnerable to fire, and the introduction of the Risk Based Fire Protection Inspection Programme (Legislative Fire Safety).

Intelligence lead targeting

Information from partner agencies continues to be shared with the Service which allows us to identify those people who are most at risk from fire. We feed this information into our Vulnerable Person Index which produces anonymised lists of addresses for our fire crews to target for Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) delivery. Information sharing agreements are in place with a number of agencies including local councils and the NHS.

RTC Strategy

MFRS are now embedded in road safety partnerships across Merseyside and nationally including the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA), BRAKE and Road Safety GB. Education and engagement has been agreed with Local Authorities and developed in schools and colleges through the delivery of our "Suddenly from Nowhere" package, and national campaigns such as the CFOA's road safety week are supported in full within each district. We are delivering Road Safety education to all MFRS staff.

Enhance youth engagement programmes

Our Youth Engagement teams continue to deliver the Princes Trust Programme for young people, with additional more cost effective delivery models being piloted in partnership at more venues. Merseyside has some of the most successful course retention rates for young people in the region.

The highly successful Beacon Programme which focuses on helping 13-16 years olds to develop life skills and enhance team working as an alternative to the school curriculum relies solely on external funding. We continue to work with public and private sector partners to fund such opportunities for our young people – particularly those at risk of exclusion from school.

Protection

The revised Fire Protection Policy has been published following consultation, supported by the Risk Based Inspection Programme which aims to target risk and offer support to the business community. The Policy incorporates the changes in legislation including the Primary Authority Scheme for Fire Protection, where individual Fire and Rescue Authorities lead on fire protection matters for specific commercial organisations.

Unwanted fire signals

The Authority has now fully embedded the Risk Based Strategy for responding to Unwanted Fire Signals resulting in a reduction of over 70% in the actuations of fire alarms that we class as unwanted.

Excellent Prevention & Protection

PLANS FOR 2015 AND BEYOND

Home Safety – Vulnerable People and Places

The Home Safety Strategy is being refreshed to enhance capacity and engage with more people who are vulnerable in their homes, with a particular focus on those residents who are over 65. Officers continue to develop data sharing protocols with partner agencies and referral pathways so operational staff, specialist advocates and volunteers can carry out targeted interventions to reduce risk in the home. We feed this information into our Vulnerable Person Index which produces anonymised lists of addresses for staff to target for Home Fire Safety Check delivery. Consideration is being given to collaborative partnerships to enhance our capacity to carry out interventions in the Home.

Management Information Systems are being developed to support the intelligence led approach to targeting risk and delivering positive outcomes for our communities (associated with the Service's Key Performance Indicators).

The 20/20 vision for Prevention and Protection will include a review of working arrangements with partners such as Fire Support Network and the Firefit Hub and consider collaborative partnerships that enhance the management of risk and those most vulnerable.

Road Safety

MFRS will develop the Road Safety Strategy to include delivery of road safety education to Year 7 pupils in Liverpool, a new MFRS motorcycle road safety approach and Roadshows with our partners using the new MFRS Road Safety Vehicle. We will link nationally with the Chief Fire Officers' Association to standardise and support their Road Safety Strategy.

Children and Young People (CYP)

Our Youth Engagement teams will continue to deliver the Princes Trust (PT)

programmes. MFRS have been commissioned to deliver a refreshed Beacon Programme tailored to suit the needs of the customer and national funding has been secured to expand the provision of Fire Cadets across each District of the County. The strategy for CYP engagement in Merseyside will be reviewed to consider the future delivery of existing programmes and a review of interventions for young fire setters, activity carried out by operational staff and safeguarding.

Arson/Anti-social Behaviour

MFRS continue to establish more premises as Safe Havens and will continue to seek funding for front line interventions to reduce Anti-social Behaviour. District based advocate provision will be aligned to Merseyside Police structures to ensure the impact of partnership working is maximised. We will develop and build on the success of site specific and seasonal campaigns to minimise the effect of anti-social behaviour and arson in the community.

Protection

The Protection Team will be restructured to reflect the National Competency Framework for Business Safety Regulators and will consider future efficiencies in that restructure.

A new Management Information System for Protection will be purchased to support Business safety across the County. We will continue to work with commercial partners to develop the Primary Authority Scheme.

Unwanted Fire Signals

Protection officers are working collaboratively with businesses to further reduce the impact of false alarms cause by unwanted fire signals.

High Rise Strategy

The Authority has provided capital funding to support local authorities in providing sprinklers in high rise blocks of flats aimed at reducing risk to occupants and firefighters in those premises. The publicity campaign including the Sprinkler Symposium has been completed and applications for funding to deliver sprinkler projects have been received and will be assessed on a risk basis. The programme will be delivered into and beyond 2015.

Excellent People

Update on IRMP 2013-16 Actions

Firefighter Fitness Policy

The appointment of a Fitness and Rehabilitation Co-ordinator to work in conjunction with Occupational Health, and the District Management Teams has proved to be a successful asset, addressing and resolving a number of fitness issues and ensuring an earlier return to operational duties for a number of staff. The introduction of specific training time within the new work routine has been supported by this role, alongside the creation of operational training programmes.

Other duties personnel have been assigned to meaningful work projects whilst working with Occupational Health and the Fitness Advisors to ensure a return to operational duties as soon as possible. The Authority has sought to revoke the current Absence Procedure and introduction a specific Capability Procedure which will be embodied within the suite of policies to address sickness absence and support individual attendance at work.

Staff Survey

The Authority undertook a 'Your Service Your Voice' staff survey in 2014 to better understand the needs and aspirations of its staff and to use it as a spring board for continuous organisational improvement. An action plan is being produced at the time of writing to address key areas of low engagement and build on the strengths of the Service.

Support Service Review

The service has used voluntary severance and natural staff turnover to

manage the necessary reductions in the number of back office and support service roles in order to protect frontline services and avoid the need for compulsory redundancies as part of the last Support Service Review. All roles have been reviewed as part of this process to ensure that only essential activities are delivered. A further review of the Support services is planned in 2014/15.

Change Management

The Authority has adopted a set of Organisational Values that are embedded across the Service and underpin all that we do. They are an integral part of our current development strategy and future recruitment and promotion for all staff. The introduction of the Development Gateway for all uniformed roles provides accredited development, coaching and mentoring for those employees seeking progression within the Service and is aligned to core and command competency.

Support Staff Review 2013/15

The Support Services Review 2013/15 has been completed, having delivered the required savings figure. Implementation of Department and role redesign, natural wastage, and voluntary severance/early retirement initiatives has taken place with the support of the representative bodies and without the need for any compulsory redundancies.

Excellent People

PLANS FOR 2015 AND BEYOND

Working with the representative bodies (e.g. trade unions) we will explore all options to ensure the most efficient systems of work continue to deliver a high quality service to the communities of Merseyside. This will explore the development of national conditions of service including the design and delivery of unique local work routines and reward structures that deliver the efficiencies required by the Government's Spending Review in conjunction with an engaged and productive workforce.

Recruitment

The Authority intends to recruit over the period 2015-17 to ensure that it is able to meet the challenges faced by the Service now and in the future. This is only achievable through the development of a competent and engaged workforce. The Workforce Strategy will incorporate flexible recruitment and leadership development.

Absence Management

The Authority is implementing a Capability procedure to replace the Absence and Attendance procedure. The new procedure will allow local management of sickness absence that will be supplemented by a range of occupational health initiatives, management advice and guidance and early interventions to support all employees in their attendance at work.

Productivity

In conjunction with the representative bodies, the Authority will introduce new ways of working, utilising revised working practices and contractual stipulations. The Authority will use national and local reward structures to address the extreme financial restrictions placed on the Authority whilst

attempting to retain continuity of service delivery and employee engagement.

Change Management

The Authority will continue to utilise and support the reduced resources it has to ensure optimum output and service delivery. The revised shift and work routine will continue to be supported by a range of training and development opportunities. Full implementation of a Development Gateway process will offer those employees who wish to seek development or career advancement that opportunity, and assess their potential transparently against the organisational values and operational expertise. This ensures we are staffed by motivated employees who share the same organisational values.

Redundancy

To date the service has reduced its employee numbers to address the budgetary reduction placed on the Authority through natural wastage and voluntary severance/early retirement. We will address future staffing reductions endeavouring to avoid compulsory redundancy. However the options are severely limited and it is unlikely this can be guaranteed in the future. A review of strategy and practices will address staffing change whilst fully supporting those staff involved in any further redundancy situation.

Support Staff Review 2015-17

The Authority will use the previous strategy to review its support structures and seek the required savings. A set of criteria will ensure all roles are evaluated and decisions made based on the continued growth of the Service within the parameters of the financial restrictions placed on it. Assessment will be based on the future requirement of services, how they can be delivered either locally, collaboratively or externally, as well as the implications if roles are no longer undertaken.

Medium Term Strategy 2012-17

Our Medium Term Strategy covers a 5 year period and we will review our performance against this strategy on an annual basis.

The aim of our strategy is to ensure that our Action Plans are focussed on the achievement of our Mission;

Safer, Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters

The IRMP Medium Term Strategy for the development of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service is:

Objective 1

To reduce accidental dwelling fires and the deaths and injuries which result from these fires in Merseyside.

Action: To analyse our performance on an annual basis using the Performance Indicators (PI's) which relate to fire deaths, injuries and accidental dwelling fires. We will introduce measures as necessary to ensure the reduction in all figures.

Target: We will reduce accidental fires in homes and the deaths and injuries they cause on Merseyside by 5% by 2017.

Current Progress 2013/14: While the number of accidental dwelling fires is within 10% of the target, sadly injuries and fatalities have increased. We are working more intelligently to target the most vulnerable people in Merseyside through targeted Home Fire Safety Checks to reach those most in need of our help.

Objective 2

To achieve an appropriate speed and weight of attack in emergency response to fires and road traffic collisions.

Action: To analyse our performance against our emergency response standards and to introduce standards and measures as necessary to improve performance.

Target: To achieve a 90% attainment level against our response standards to all life risk incidents.

Current Progress 2013/14: We reduced the number of appliances from 32 to 28 and following consultation introduced a 10 minute response standard for all emergency incidents. On average we are attending emergency incidents in 5.03 seconds. We are monitoring appliances booking mobile to incidents within 1.9 minutes of being alerted. On average we are achieving this target on 92.2% of occasions, this is closely monitored by District Teams.

Objective 3

To reduce fires caused by antisocial behaviour in those areas of Merseyside identified as most at risk.

Action: To analyse risk to ensure we target our intervention activity to reduce antisocial behaviour in those areas where risk is highest across Merseyside.

Target: To reduce antisocial behaviour fires by 5% by 2017.

Current Progress 2013/14: We have continued to make improvements in relation to this objective. In particular, the way in which we work with partners has brought us excellent results over the bonfire period, with incidents reducing by 50%.

Objective 4

To reduce the impact of fire on commercial enterprise and the wider community.

Action: We aim to use all available resources to ensure we minimise the risk to commercial property from accidental and deliberate fires and to help affected businesses recover to normality as soon as possible.

Target: To reduce fires in commercial premises by 5% by 2017.

Current Progress 2013/14: Deliberate and accidental fire in non-domestic premises are below target. We have continued to work closely with local businesses to reduce these incidents.

Objective 5

To reinforce our role in fire prevention by improving fire safety within the public and commercial buildings of Merseyside.

Action: We will work with all businesses and stakeholders to educate and inform the business community about their responsibilities for fire safety in the workplace and to protect the public to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) 2004.

Target: We will improved regulatory compliance rates by 5% by 2017.

Current Progress 2013/14: Our risk based approach to meeting our legislative fire safety duties and responsibilities will assist us in continuing the improvement to Objective 4.

Objective 6

To ensure that the operational workforce operate safely and effectively in the resolution of all emergency incidents.

Action: We will continue a programme for assessment of competence which

reflects the evolving risks facing the Fire and Rescue Service in Merseyside and nationally and assess all staff within the operational workforce.

Target: We will assess the operational workforce across all areas of generic risk annually by 2013 and beyond.

Current Progress 2013/14: We continue to assess operational personnel through the use of operational monitoring during incidents and through a structured audit of station training, which is on-going through the year. Any areas of improvement or best practice are actioned through the Operational Improvement Group.

Objective 7

To ensure that we can respond safely and effectively to all emergency incidents locally, regionally and nationally.

Action: We will maintain a programme to test operational plans and procedures using internal and multi-agency exercises.

Target: We will test the effectiveness of all operational plans and procedures annually by 2014 and beyond.

Current Progress 2013/14: We have reviewed and exercised against Operational Plans which will continue with our multi agency partners against risks identified within the National Risk Assessment (NRA), the Merseyside Resilience Forum (MRF), Community Risk Register (CRR) and site specific risks.

Equality Objectives 2012-17

Equality Objective 1

In the past ten years Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has reduced accidental fires in the home by 37%.

Action: We will continue to build on this work through the use of our customer insight (Vulnerable Person Index) modelling and our station planning process to target individuals at risk.

Target: To reduce accidental fires in the home and the deaths and injuries they cause on Merseyside by a further 5% by 2017.

How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristic – Age and Disability: We know through extensive research that some of the people at highest risk from fire are also covered by the nine protected characteristics that form part of the Equality Act 2010, for example elderly and disabled people. Our activity focuses on reducing risk for vulnerable people.

Current Progress

At the end of 2013/14, the Equality and Diversity target for Accidental Dwelling Fires (fires in the home) has been narrowly missed by 20 incidents (2%). High levels of accidental dwelling fires during the first three quarters of the year have contributed to missing the target of 1,136. A review of the Home Fire Safety Strategy will take into account this Equality & Diversity objective. This includes working to target our Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs) at the most vulnerable people in our communities.

Equality Objective 2

We will reduce risk for people who live in rented properties across Merseyside.

Action: By continuing to build productive relationships with Registered Social Landlords.

Target: To cut accidental kitchen fires in social housing by 5% by 2017.

How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristics – Age and Disability, Socio-Economic Disadvantage: We know that people who live in rented properties often have other needs and fall within the protected characteristics. We've worked well with Registered Social Landlords to protect their residents, but some of the higher risk people live in privately rented accommodation and we want to help them too.

Current Progress

At the end of 2013/14 there were a total of 219 accidental fires in properties owned by registered social landlords, and the Equality & Diversity target of 237 has been met.

Equality Objective 3

We will continue to engage with young people in vulnerable areas.

Action: Through our award winning youth engagement programmes.

Target: Reducing deliberate anti-social behaviour fire setting by 5% by 2017.

How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristics – Age, Socio-Economic Disadvantage: The anti-social behaviour of a minority of young people can impact most on the elderly and on other young people too. We want to help young people become good role models for others in their area and help older people feel safer in their homes.

Current progress

For the second year running, MFRA have achieved the Equality & Diversity target of 5,767 incidents, current incidents are down to 512, 640 incidents less than the target.

Equality Objective 4

We will work with at-risk groups and local partners to contribute to the reduction in the number and severity of road traffic collisions across Merseyside.

Action: To work towards achieving the local target of reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions.

Target: Reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions by 37.5% by 2020.

How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristic – Age:

Young people are at a particularly high risk of being killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions. We want to have a positive impact on this group and help to keep them safer on the roads, whilst also monitoring road traffic collision risks in relation to young and old across all five districts and responding accordingly.

Current progress

The target in relation to road traffic collisions has been achieved for the third year running. However, the number of injuries was 97 over the target. We are currently delivering a programme of engagement with schools, presenting our “Suddenly from Nowhere” education package. We also work with all the young people we come into contact with through Prince’s Trust and Beacon Project programmes to instil road safety messages.

Equality Objective 5

Our aim is to create a strong cohesive organisation which is positive about rising to the future challenges we face.

Action: Our aim is to increase the representation of all minority groups within the communities of Merseyside in the Fire and Rescue Service.

Target: Ensuring all future firefighter recruit courses have a minimum make-up of 20% female and 8% black minority ethnic employees by 2017.

How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristic – Gender and Ethnic Origin: We’d like our workforce to better represent the make-up of our communities and we will work to encourage applications from under-represented groups when we carry out any recruitment.

Current progress

No uniformed recruitment has taken place over the life of the previous IRMP but a Positive Action recruitment programme will take place in 2014/15 when we plan to recruit firefighters.

Our workforce (both uniformed and non uniformed) equality analysis shows that there has been a 1% change in our gender split since last year, with 1% more females working at MFRA than last year, making a whole workforce split of 79% Male and 21% females.

Note: Changes have been made to Objective 5 for operational year 2014/15 and these will be reported on in the Annual Report 2014/15.

MFRA are committed to tackling inequality, tailoring our services to meet the needs of our diverse communities and treating our staff and service users fairly.

The MFRA Equality & Diversity Report 2013/14 can be found on our website.

If you would like to learn more about our work, or have any questions please contact:

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Telephone 0151 296 4000

Glossary of Terms

ARA	Analytical Risk Assessment	JESIP	Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour	MFRA	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
C&C	Command and Control	MFRS	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
CBRN(E)	Chemical, Biological, Radiation, Nuclear and Conventional Explosives	MRF	Merseyside Resilience Forum
COMAH	Control of Major Accident Hazards	NHS	National Health Service
CRR	Corporate Risk Register	NRA	National Risk Assessment
ESMCP	Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme	NWAS	North West Ambulance Service
ESN	Emergency Services Network	PFI	Private Finance Initiative
FRMS	Fatigue Risk Management System	PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
FRS	Fire and Rescue Service	QCF	Qualifications Credit Framework
HART	Hazardous Area Response Team (Ambulance)	RTC	Road Traffic Collision
HFSC	Home Fire Safety Check	SOP	Standard Operational Procedures
HVP	High Volume Pump	SPA	Safe Person Assessment
ICT	Information Communication Technology	TCA	Technical Command Assessment
IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Plan	USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
JCC	Joint Control Centre		

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Equality Impact Assessment

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority Budget

IMPACT OF YEARS 3 AND 4 OF THE SPENDING REVIEW

INCLUDING EIA REPORTS FOR:

- 1. INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2013-15***
- 2. SUPPORT SERVICES REVIEW***
- 3. BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF COUNCIL TAX RISE PROPOSALS***

1. Integrated Risk management Plan (IRMP) 13-15 Equality Impact Assessment report

Title of policy/report/project:	Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2013/15 Supplement 2015/17
Department:	Strategy and Performance
Date:	22.9.14
1: What is the aim or purpose of the IRMP and proposed changes it contains	
<p>The IRMP is MFRA's primary planning document. It is a statutory requirement of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and is compiled in line with the National Framework 2012. The plan presents MFRA's short and medium term aims in relation to managing and reducing risk in Merseyside and the contribution made by MFRA to regional and national resilience. The Supplementary plan to IRMP 2013/16 is based on the risks and the needs of our local communities and sets specific actions for the years 2015/16 and 2016/17.</p> <p>The IRMP has been developed in conjunction with the outcome of the Public Spending Review, which ultimately affects MFRA with a cut of £10 million to its 2013/14 - 14/15 budget, £6.3m from 2015/16 and an anticipated cut of £9.1m for 2016/17 and our IRMP Budget Principles.</p> <p>The IRMP has been developed to address the key risks and challenges facing local communities and sets out the approach we aim to take in order to deliver the most effective fire and rescue service to the local communities of Merseyside whilst considering the public's views, where possible to; minimise station closures, maintain the same levels of service and avoiding compulsory staff redundancies. These were the key outcomes of the public consultation events held in 2012, 2013 and 2014, where members of the community across Merseyside's 5 districts were invited to provide their opinions in relation to forthcoming budget cuts and our broad proposals in relation to these cuts in funding.</p> <p>The IRMP has established the following proposals to help the MFRA to respond to the cut in it's budget :</p> <p>1. Fire Station Proposal</p> <p>It is now necessary to close or merge fire stations to meet the budget challenges. This process commenced in 2014/15 and will need to continue up to 2020. Full public</p>	

consultations will take place on each proposed change. MFRA will endeavour to maintain 28 appliances but some will be crewed on a wholetime retained basis.

2. Capability Policy

The Authority is implementing a Capability procedure that will replace the Absence and Attendance procedure. This will provide a revised approach to sickness management. The procedures will allow local management of sickness absence that will be supplemented by a range of occupational health initiatives, management advice and guidance and early interventions to support all employees in their attendance at work. This Policy has been consulted on widely with key stakeholders and has undergone an EIA.

3. Duty Systems

Due to further financial pressures new, more efficient shift patterns and duty systems will continue to be considered. Whilst firefighter safety and productivity was increased by the changes made to the existing working patterns (2 days, 2 nights), a more efficient and effective shift system model may be able to increase safety and productivity further. An individual EIA was completed.

4. Home Safety Strategy

The Home Safety Strategy is being refreshed to enhance capacity and engage with more people who are vulnerable in their homes with a particular focus on those residents who are over 65. Officers continue to develop data sharing protocols with partner agencies and referral pathways so operational staff, specialist advocates and volunteers carry out targeted interventions to reduce risk in the home. A full individual EIA was undertaken for the Home Safety Strategy.

2: Who will be affected by the changes proposed in the IRMP

All communities on Merseyside
Visitors to Merseyside
MFRA Employees
Authority Members
Local Authorities and other Emergency Services
Other Community Partners

3. What monitoring data have you considered

Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include data which shows whether it is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.

What monitoring data have you considered?

Equality data and Demographics report for Merseyside - <http://www.merseyfire>.

What did it show?

The report shows that there are almost 1.4 million residents in Merseyside, an increase of 1% since 2001 (13,400 people). The population is split into 48.6% males and 51.4% females. Merseyside has a lower proportion of children (16.5%) and higher proportions of working age residents (66.3%) and older people.

gov.uk/aspix/pages/equality/pdf/Profile of Merseyside Demography Equality and Diversity.pdf	<p>(17.2%) than the North West averages. The trend shows an aging population with older groups increasing and younger age groups decreasing.</p>
<p>MFRA Customer Insight Data and MFRA Risk Maps: 1 to 5</p>	<p>Merseyside is not as religiously diverse as the rest of Northwest with the biggest proportion of residents being Christian at 74%.</p>
<p>MFRA Performance Indicators 2013/14</p>	<p>Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has developed a risk model, which focuses on the risk to life and is based on the factors which we know have most impact upon risk. This approach uses relevant data sets, including the Indices of Multiple Deprivation as well as local, historical incident response data. Weightings have then been used to represent the differing influence of these data sets on risk. All of these factors are then totalled, banded and then mapped by area to establish the MF&RS risk map. These themed maps help us to understand the likelihood of a particular event occurring in a given area, which in turn forms a part of the risk assessment process. It ensures we target our resources at locations with identified risks.</p> <p>There are some large areas of Merseyside that fall within the highest levels of social deprivation. There remain large pockets of deprivation with high levels of social exclusion and crime; 40% of wards in Merseyside are ranked in the top 5 percentage of the most deprived wards in England.</p> <p>Merseyside is safer and stronger as a result of the actions that the Service has taken since 1999 to prevent fires and other incidents. In particular our performance indicators show that :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall incidents have fallen from 23,023 to 15,348 in the last 5 years ▪ On an average day we attend 33% fewer incidents – showing our prevention work is effective at preventing fires and other rescues ▪ Accidental dwelling fires have reduced by 11% and Knowsley in particular has seen the largest reduction at -11% or 37 incidents.

4: Research

Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include quantitative data and qualitative information; anything you have obtained from other sources e.g. CFA/CLG guidance, other FRSs, etc.

What research have you considered?

Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 and National Fire and Rescue Framework 2012

Appropriate legislation as it applies to the Fire and Rescue Service e.g. Equality Act 2010

Integrated Risk Management Plan Consultation 2012 onwards reports

Previous MFRA EIAs carried out Key Policies

What did it show?

Establishes the powers and duties of the FRS and sets out the requirement to undertake an IRMP and what needs to be covered.

Sets out the legal framework which the MFRA needs to comply with in relation to assessing the impact of any changes to services on different equality groups

Describes the public consultation process, approach and outcomes for the 5 district forums. (See section 5 Consultation and specific merger and closure consultations for more detail) this intelligence has been our guiding principles for making proposals for change to services to meet the budget cuts imposed by the government.

Help to identify any Equality Issues to consider when making any changes to service provisions to the public and the impacts on different groups of staff.

5. Consultation – Background on the IRMP 15-17 consultation process

The current National Framework for the Fire and Rescue Service sets out the expectations on Fire and Rescue Services to engage with communities regarding the decisions it makes about service provision when stating:

“Fire and rescue authorities are accountable to their communities for their actions and decision making. They need to have transparent processes in place to deliver this and engage with their communities to provide them with the opportunity to influence their local service. Local accountability is a vital check on the services provided by fire and rescue authorities.”

MFRA is also aware when developing consultation plans of the Localism Act, which provides

a greater opportunity for the public to scrutinise and challenge the decisions made by local authorities. For this reason that MFRA began consultation with the public early in June 2012 to enable the public to shape the proposals for change as a result of the funding cuts from government.

In addition, The Public Sector Equality Duty sets out arrangements for public bodies (including FRA) to consider the needs of different Protected Groups¹¹ in the way it designs its services and policies. It is therefore of great importance to ensure that consultation on the IRMP involved people from all diverse groups. The decisions made by MFRA have been able to reflect the needs of communities and be supported by them and this resulting in greater transparency and accountability, and members of the community will have a stake in the development of levels of service that affect them.

What Consultation has taken place and what did it say?

The reports on the outcomes of the January 2014 IRMP, June 2014 Merger and closure consultation forums are attached at **appendix 1**. The forums were very successful and resulted in some high quality comments and views that members and officers found useful in making decision about the needs and the priorities of different community groups.

In summary there were 5 public IRMP consultation forums held across the 5 districts. Each forum had a good representation of all protected groups. Likewise for the Merger Consultations a public focus group, public meeting, joint public forum, stakeholder business breakfast, staff communications and presentations to councils and politicians were held in areas with an interest.

The major areas considered by the forums to be considered when making decisions about priorities and resources as a result of any budget cuts were:

1. “Reducing the number of fire stations (and thus fire-fighters and fire engines)”

The forums were asked to select the criteria they believed to be most important. Participants considered Emergencies and Special Risks to be the most important criteria, followed by Deprivation, Volume of Incidents, and Demographics and, lastly, Distance from Other Stations. Also, when looking at the maps of fire stations and relative risk across Merseyside, participants noticed the varying numbers of fire stations in each area.

2. “Maintaining 26 Fire Stations”

Participants were asked whether MFRA should maintain its current 26 (mainly 1 pump) fire stations or opt for 16 (mainly 2 pump) stations. Financial efficiency due to less site costs, sale of sites and crewing economies were explained. Overall there was overwhelming support for maintaining 26 fire stations.

3. “Response Time Standards”

Pre 2004 National Response Standards were discussed at length, isochrome maps were used

¹¹ The Equality Act 2010 covers Protected Characteristics of : age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and marriage & civil partnerships.

to illustrate response standards from each station, participants were reminded that the previous 5 forums had very much supported the principle of an MFRA response of 'attending at least 90% of life risk incidents within a given time period'. People were concerned about the slower response of the second appliance but accepted it was not unreasonable. Unanimous support was recorded for "the first appliance to attend at least 90% of all life risk incidents within 10 minutes".

4. "Shift System, Work Routine and Firefighter Productivity"

The 2 2 4 shifts system was explained and the inefficiencies of the considerable 'downtime' on a 15 hour night shift. The 1800hrs shift change time disrupts late afternoon presentations and protection work. Participants were almost unanimous the current shift system should be changed and the 12 and 24 hour options be considered.

5. Knowsley Merger & Closure Consultation

The meetings were informed of the wide range of options considered by MFRA to reduce expenditure including LLAR, day crewed stations, community retained, station closures and mergers. Financial constraints, reducing incident numbers, fire station coverage and populations were illustrated and discussed.

Proposal to merge 2 stations into one new centrally located purpose built site with one wholetime and one wholetime retained appliance was explained. Discussion made clear that MFRA would not be considering these proposals if not facing an urgent need to reduce funding. An overwhelming majority supported the proposals.

Those who participated were keen that MFRA still maintain targeted Prevention and Protection work targeted at those most in need. This will remain a priority for MFRA.

Where we cannot meet the ten minute response standard in areas where we are proposing mergers we will:

Increase Prevention and Protection intervention for vulnerable people

Enter into reciprocal agreements with neighbouring FRS eg. Cheshire FRS in Cronton area.

6. Further Merger & Closure Consultations

Consultation is about to commence, in October 2014, on merging Upton and West Kirby Fire Stations into a new centrally located station in Greasby and in November on the closure of Allerton Fire Station in Liverpool.

Consultation will take place in the future on the merger of St Helens and Eccleston Fire Stations to a new location in the Town Centre and possible further mergers or closures in Liverpool District.

All stakeholders including local residents, staff, partner agencies and Local Councils will be fully consulted in a similar format to the Knowsley Consultations.

IRMP 2013/16 Consultation Points

7. “Re-defining response times (for example, adopting a single response standard of, say, ‘attending 90% of life incidents with at least one fire engine within eight minutes’)”

eight-in-ten participants supported the adoption of a single response standard of **“attending 90% of life incidents with at least one fire engine within eight minutes “providing it continues to endeavour to get to incidents as quickly as possible**

8. “Introducing alternative crewing systems to match variations in ‘demand’”

The vast majority of participants across all five forums thought that MFRA should consider more flexible crewing systems to match variations in demand

9. “Reducing support services (including prevention and protection activities)”

A majority of participants agreed that, given its diminishing resources, MFRA should target its prevention work towards higher risk areas, higher risk people (in low risk areas), and areas that have slower response times.

Charging for providing smoke alarms in low risk/affluent areas was also endorsed by a large majority, who felt that those who can afford to pay should expect to have to do so *(note this is dealt with in more detail in the EIA document “Support Staff Review to EIA” attached to this report)*

10. “Raising council tax levels beyond the capping level.”

Although several participants felt that they themselves could support a large council tax rise, it was widely felt that the population at large would not do so in the current economic climate

There was also concern that a large Council Tax increase could set two undesirable precedents – that is, it could:

- Be a precedent for other authorities to make similar increases in Merseyside
- Encourage central government to think that more central taxation could be transferred to the local level.

Even those participants who supported the idea of an increase felt that the MFRA would not win the five referendums needed to authorise such a policy

(note this is dealt with in more detail in the EIA document “Proposals to raise Council tax EIA” attached to this report)

The outcomes of the public consultation have been taken into consideration when developing proposals in the IRMP. The key points raised by the public were :

- No closure of fire stations
- Change crewing and rotas to be more flexible to meet demand
- Standardise response times and be transparent about remote areas with slower response times
- Reduce support staff resources where they are not focused on high risk activities

6. Conclusions

On reviewing the research, data and consultation together with the proposals outlined in section 1 above, it is envisaged that there will be very little negative impact on any particular protected group and no perceived disproportionate service delivery compared to the current level of service received by these groups currently.

We will increase prevention and protection work in areas affected by mergers and closures by intelligently targeting those people identified as vulnerable.

We will explore possibilities of working with our neighbouring partners to assist with Fire and rescues in areas where mergers and closures are proposed.

(a) Age

Service Delivery in relation age :

- The majority of Merseyside population will see little or no difference to the way in which we are planning to deliver our service compared to their levels of service they currently receive; regardless of our chosen option.

Community risks in relation to age :

- Older people have been identified as more at risk from fire. As a result, prevention activity will continue to be targeted towards them.
- Middle aged men living alone have been identified as more risk from fires. As a result, prevention activity will continue to be targeted towards them.
- Young people are more likely to be involved in fires relating to anti-social behaviour. As a result, prevention activity will continue to be targeted towards them.

Delivery plans and service plans will continue to plan for innovative and efficient ways to engage with different communities of different ages to ensure that all emergencies receive the same high level of response.

(b) Disability including mental, physical and sensory conditions)

Service delivery in relation to disabled people

- It is not envisaged that the impact of the changes on either proposal 1 or proposal 2 will have any significant detrimental impact on disabled people. Option 1 would ensure that disabled vulnerable people at risk of fire and life risk incidents will get the fastest and most efficient response which is critical to those with significant health complications. The ability to maintain community fire stations and link closely with disabled community groups is key
- The way in which MFRA classifies disabled people as high risk will not change and we will ensure that their needs in relation to Fire and Rescue services will be met. Services and policies will continue to take into account their needs of this group.

Community risks in relation to Disability

- People with disabilities have been identified as more at risk from fire occurring and in some cases, less able to escape when a fire does occur. Further consultation with Disabled People will be carried out during the lifespan of the IRMP to establish their experiences and impacts of the service changes.
- Hate crime involving fire as a weapon targeted at people with mental and physical disabilities will be monitored throughout the life of this IRMP to establish where further prevention and protection can be targeted

Community delivery plans and service plans will continue to plan for innovative and efficient ways to engage with different disability groups and support agencies to ensure that all emergencies receive the same high level of response.

(c) Race (include: nationality, national or ethnic origin and/or colour)**Service delivery in relation to race**

- It is not envisaged that the impact of the changes in either proposal 1 or proposal 2 will have any significant detrimental impact on different ethnic groups. Option 1 would ensure that those at risk of hate crime and fire and life risk incidents will get the fastest and most efficient response. The ability to maintain community fire stations and link closely with different ethnic minority groups is key to ensuring the service we provide meets the needs/risks of the communities.

Community risks in relation to race

- Some minority ethnic communities have been identified as being at greater risk from fire and where we identify this we will work with those communities to target prevention activity.
- Racial differences can place people at increased risk of hate crime and this can include the use of fire as a weapon. Our prevention and protection work with the police and other partners helps people to protect themselves and assists in the prevention of such crimes. Monitoring of such incidents will be key to understanding the needs and experiences of these community groups.

Community delivery plans and service plans will continue to plan for innovative and efficient ways to engage with different ethnic minority groups and support agencies to ensure that all emergencies receive the same high level of response.

(d) Religion or Belief**Service Delivery in relation to Religion/belief**

- Merseyside is predominantly Christian (79%) and less diverse in terms of religion than the rest of UK. We are not aware of any particular religious groups that will be affected disproportionately either by either option 1 or 2 or changes to the response time.

Community risks in relation to religion/belief

- Some religious groups have been identified as being at greater risk from fire and where we identify this we will work with those communities to target prevention activity.
- Religious differences /tensions between groups can place people at increased risk of hate crime and this can include the use of fire as a weapon. Our prevention and protection work with the police and other partners helps people to protect themselves and assists in the prevention of such crimes. Monitoring of such incidents will be key to understanding the needs and experiences of the different faith groups.

Community delivery plans and service plans will continue to plan for innovative and efficient ways to engage with different faith groups and support agencies to ensure that all emergencies receive the same high level of response.

(e) Sex (include gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity)

Service Delivery in relation to Gender

- It is not envisaged that the impact of the changes in either proposal 1 or proposal 2 will have any significant detrimental impact on different genders. Option 1 would ensure that those at risk of fire and RTC will get the fastest and most effective response. The ability to maintain community fire stations and link closely with different gender groups is key to ensuring the service we provide meets the needs/risks of the communities.

Community risks in relation to Gender

- There is evidence to suggest that men are generally more at risk from fire and road traffic collisions. We regularly monitor the fires where people die and older women tend to be the highest risk group. As a result, prevention activity will continue to targeted towards these groups at risk

Community delivery plans and service plans will continue to plan for innovative and efficient ways to engage with different gender groups and support agencies to ensure that all emergencies receive the same high level of response.

(f) Sexual Orientation

Service delivery in relation to Sexual Orientation

- It is not envisaged that the impact of the changes to service delivery in either proposal 1 or proposal 2 will have any significant detrimental impact on people from different sexual orientation. Option 1 would ensure that those at risk of fire and RTC will get the fastest and most effective response. The ability to maintain community fire stations and link closely with different LGBT groups is key to ensuring the service we provide meets the needs/risks of these communities.

Community risks in relation to Sexual Orientation

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual people can be at an increased risk from hate related crime and this might include the use of fire as a weapon. Our prevention and protection work with the police and other support agencies helps people to protect themselves and assists in the prevention of such crimes.

Community delivery plans and service plans will continue to plan for innovative and efficient ways to engage with different LGBT groups support agencies to ensure that all emergencies receive the same high level of response.

(g) Socio-economic disadvantage

We have extensive business intelligence which shows that socio-economic disadvantage is significant risk factor in relation to all types of fire. As a result many of our prevention activities focus on those areas with the highest levels of deprivation (40% of Merseyside is in the top 5% most deprived areas in England)

7. Decisions

*If the policy/report/project will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how it will change or why it is to continue in the same way.
If no changes are proposed, the policy/report/project needs to be objectively justified as being an appropriate and necessary means of achieving the legitimate aim set out in 1 above.*

The information provided in sections 1 to 6 explain the ways in which different protected groups may be affected by the aims and objectives set out in the IRMP, specifically the proposed changes to service as a result of the significant reduction in funding by the government.

Option 1 provides the best support for all protected groups and helps to maintain and increase community engagement whilst maintaining current standards in responses to fire and rescue.

8. Equality Improvement Plan

List any changes to our policies or procedures that need to be included in the Equality Action Plan/Service Plan.

9. Equality & Diversity Sign Off

The completed EIA form must be signed off by the Diversity Manager before it is submitted to Strategic Management Group or Authority.

Signed off by:

Date:

Comments :

Action Planned	Responsibility of	Completed by
1.Ensure that Low Risk HFSC's are carried out as a priority to the areas where 10 minute response time may not be fully met 2. Consider increasing	Knowsley Community Safety Teams	

<p>community interventions early in 14/15 for the areas where 10 minute response times may not be met :</p> <p>3. Engage with neighbouring FRA's to establish opportunities to cover areas affected by rescue responses.</p> <p>4. Continue to establish innovative and efficient ways to engage with all the protected groups</p> <p>5. Monitor hate crime in relation to fire and each protected group</p>		
<p>For any advice, support or guidance about completing this form please contact the DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk or on 0151 296 4237</p> <p>The completed form along with the related policy/report/project document should be emailed to the Diversity Team at: DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk</p>		

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION		
DATE:	23 OCTOBER 2014	REPORT NO:	CFO/110/14
PRESENTING OFFICER	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	REPORT AUTHOR:	DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	AM SEARLE, LYNN HUGHES SUZANNE LEA, , GM LONGSHAW		
TITLE OF REPORT:	OPERATIONAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY 2014/15		

APPENDICES:	A	EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
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Purpose of Report

1. To advise Members of the operational recruitment strategy for 2014/15, and seek their endorsement of the proposed contractual terms to be applied.

Recommendation

2. That Members note and endorse:
 - a. the recruitment process contained within this report.
 - b. the recruitment of trainee firefighters under the flexible contractual arrangements specified within the report specifically a combined 32 hour Wholetime / 42 hour Wholetime Retained Contract (averaged over a 7 day period).
 - c. that the feasibility of recruiting firefighters onto a 120 hour Retained Contract is explored in order to future proof recruitment and maximise flexibility.
 - d. the development of an apprenticeship model for future recruitment.

Introduction and Background

3. At the Budget Meeting 27th February 2014 the Authority resolved, subject to public consultation and final Authority approval, to implement a number of structural changes to the operational response model in order to deliver savings required as a result of Government cuts to grant funding (CFO/011/14).

4. The structural changes approved by the Authority included the merger of up to 8 single pump stations to create 4 new two pump stations. These decisions were made on the basis that the new stations would be provided with one wholetime appliance and one wholetime retained appliance.
5. This position was also reinforced during the public consultation process conducted by Opinion Research Services and reflects the desire of the Authority to seek to maintain a wholetime crewing model rather than introducing a community retained alternative.
6. It is important to note that officers have on two occasions sought expressions of interest for wholetime retained working from within the current workforce, and whilst this was endorsed by the representative bodies, on neither occasion were sufficient expressions of interest received to crew even one appliance.
7. The necessity to staff appliances more flexibly combined with the need to ensure organisational core competence up to and beyond 2020 means that it is vital that the Authority considers its recruitment strategy now.
8. In order for the Authority to maintain a predominantly wholetime crewing model augmented by wholetime retained staffing it must recruit in such a way as to complement the existing '224' duty system which was recognised by Ken Knight in his Efficiencies Review (Facing the Future) as being very inflexible in its prescribed format within the Grey Book.
9. In recognition of this the Authority approved a £1 million recruitment reserve so as to respond to the future challenges and to build resilience into the current staffing model.
10. Notwithstanding the short term requirement to reduce staff numbers members recognised the need to recruit in the medium term because of the age profile of the workforce and the importance of maintaining a competent and effective workforce over an extended period.

Contractual Options

11. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed members at the most recent Budget Strategy Day that continued recruitment of purely wholetime contracts was no longer viable and further work would be required to establish alternative solutions which provide additional resilience.
12. As a consequence the Authority now needs to consider recruitment which extends beyond traditional 42 hour wholetime contracts, and the need to consider more flexible contracts with particular emphasis on the retained element. This will ensure that the Authority continues to be an employer of choice within the communities of Merseyside, whilst offering different contracts that make the Service more accessible to all.
13. As a result a number of options have been explored, specifically;

- The recruitment of community retained firefighters – based on Grey Book retained conditions; individuals would be employed to provide cover when they are available via a pager. Whilst this is the system advocated within the 'Facing the Future' report by Sir Ken Knight it has a number of limitations around the acquisition and maintenance of competence, regular availability and retention. Additionally retained firefighters undertake no preventative work therefore it is not deemed preferable to pursue this staffing model at this time.
 - The recruitment of firefighters on a 21 hour contract – although this would provide more flexibility this alone would not deliver the additional resilience required. It is also recognised that this might not be considered a suitable wage for staff and might present challenges with regards to recruitment and retention. As such it has been discounted at this time.
 - Members could however consider an alternative approach through recruiting firefighters on a fully retained 120 hour contract – with a commitment to allocate wholetime shifts based on the operational requirements of the Service. Under these circumstances the Authority would use staff more flexibly to cover wholetime shifts using Voluntary Additional Hours, an approach similar to that which is adopted in a number of other public services. This would ensure higher levels of training are undertaken as those staff employed on this basis would be exposed to more core training as a result of being in the workplace more frequently. This approach may present some challenges to the Authority related to initial training and long term retention which would need to be fully explored by the Authority prior to any recruitment process.
 - The recruitment of firefighters on a combined 32 hour wholetime 42 hour wholetime retained contract. This provides a guaranteed number of hours for staff as well as a payment for the undertaking of 42 hours retained duty. It is envisaged the contract holders would also provide a level of operational cover under the retained contract which would be paid at the appropriate hourly rate.
14. Having considered all the options the recommendation of the Chief Fire Officer at this time is that the Authority approves the recruitment of firefighters on a combined 32 hour wholetime 42 hour wholetime retained contract.
 15. This provides for a guaranteed number of hours for those recruited as well as a payment for the undertaking of 42 hours retained duty. It is envisaged the contract holders would also provide a level of operational cover under that retained contract which would be paid at the appropriate hourly rate. The contract would be offered as a package and so would require each individual accepting the contract to opt out of the Working Time Regulations.
 16. The combined contract means that a firefighter joining the Authority would receive circa 85% of a firefighter's wage – with the ability to work additional shifts subject to the exigencies of the Service.

17. It is also the recommendation of the Chief Fire Officer that the feasibility of recruiting firefighters on a 120 hour retained contract is explored in order to future proof recruitment and maximise flexibility.
18. The contracts recommended for Authority approval would be utilised appropriately based on the level of recruitment required to deliver optimal staffing within the ongoing budgetary constraints.
19. The wholetime/ retained contracts would be offered to those candidates deemed successful through the recruitment process.

Positive action

20. The People and Organisational Development team, in conjunction with the Diversity Manager have over the past five months been carrying out work in conjunction with the positive action strategy by attending careers fairs, graduate open days, working with community groups at open days and attending targeted sports events inviting potential applicants to complete a registration card to attend an awareness day.
21. A total of six awareness days were held at the Training and Development Academy which offered potential applicants the opportunity to learn about the application process and the role of firefighter as well as attempt the physical tests, ladder climb and rat run. They were also given an insight into the written tests that they will have to complete.
22. Following the awareness days each individual was provided with a link into the application process, and given a short window of opportunity to complete the application form.
23. This focused action has now closed and 82 applications were received which includes 17 female applications (21%) and 27 from underrepresented groups (33%).

Recruitment Process

24. The next stage is to open up the application process to the wider public.
25. As with the process above applicants will be required to complete a short questionnaire, asking experiential questions which will be assessed based on the organisational values of the Service.
26. Successful candidates will then be asked to complete a numerical awareness and situational judgement assessment, which will then be followed by physical assessment.
27. Successful candidates will then be asked to complete a full application form prior to being invited to an organisational values assessment centre.

28. The final stages of the process are the interview, medical and appropriate clearances.

Firefighters Apprenticeships

29. The People and Organisational Development Department have also considered the use of apprenticeships for long term recruitment given that the Authority remains a significant employer within Merseyside, and as such provides opportunities for employment within our communities
30. Some detailed work has been completed in relation to the development of a firefighter apprenticeship model that provides high quality development, and the opportunity to move into a firefighting role when a wholetime / wholetime retained vacancy becomes available.
31. Further work is required, however apprenticeships come with additional funding, which may offer value for money in the short term but perhaps more importantly, it will be attractive as a development opportunity for young people across Merseyside.
32. Work is being completed to fully understand the potential of this approach and will be subject to a further specific report to members.

Equality and Diversity Implications

33. The utilisation of a positive action strategy ensures that the recruitment process is open to as many applicants as possible, and does not discriminate against any group. The recruitment process is transparent and ensures appointment purely on ability and adherence to advertised job specification and organisational values.
34. The Authority recently approved a revision to its equality objectives – in that any future recruitment would be conducted in a manner to better represent the make-up of the communities of Merseyside and that future recruitment would seek to encourage applications from under- represented groups.

Staff Implications

35. Personnel undertaking the combined wholetime / wholetime retained contract will be required to commit to a minimum 32 hours per week (although there will be opportunities to work additional shifts subject to signing a opt out from the working time directive and an agreement to work voluntary additional hours being in place). An additional period of 42 hours will be available for operational resilience for which they will receive a retaining fee of 10% of a wholetime firefighter's salary.

36. The combined contract means that a firefighter joining the Authority would receive circa 85% of a firefighter's wage – with the ability to work more shifts subject to the exigencies of the Service.
37. This approach maximises the operational effectiveness of the Authority and provides flexibility for staff – offering shifts when they are available subject to their contractual requirements and the exigencies of the Service.

Legal Implications

38. The recruitment and appointment processes accord with all the legal requirements placed on the Authority when operating an open and transparent process.
39. The contract would be offered as a package and so would require each individual accepting that contract to opt out of the Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended).

Financial Implications & Value for Money

40. The change in crewing from wholetime to wholetime retained on four appliances is part of the plan to deliver the savings target of £3.4m required for the financial plan and 2015/16 budget whilst still providing operational resilience.
41. The specific saving from converting a whole time appliance to wholetime retained is approximately £0.8m (22 WTE posts)
42. All firefighters recruited through this process will be in receipt of circa 85% of a wholetime firefighters pay with the opportunity to undertake additional shifts.
43. It is expected that both the wholetime and the retained contract would be separately pensionable in line with DCLG guidance.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

44. The work patterns and hours worked will be monitored and risk assessed to ensure that risk and fatigue is minimised.
45. Firefighters working on the basis of the contractual working arrangements stipulated will undertake more risk critical training than those working a community retained contract. As a result risk will be reduced and higher levels of competence achieved.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

- 46. The Chief Fire Officer will seek to maximise appliance availability through the introduction of more flexible contracts.
- 47. A combination of wholetime and wholetime retained contracts will maximise training exposure in order to ensure the firefighters working these contracts are safe and effective.
- 48. The recruitment of staff on a more flexible contract should reduce the number of occasions when appliances become unavailable due to short term sickness.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- CFO/011/14 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority Budget and Financial Plan 2014/2015 - 2018/2019
 - CFO/038/14 Budget Resolution Transitional Response Arrangements - Order Of Appliance Unavailability
-

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Title of report:	Operational Recruitment Strategy 2014/15
Department:	POD
Date:	20.10.14
1: What is the aim or purpose of the report	
<p>This EIA focuses on the Operational Recruitment Strategy 2014/15 report being presented to Members of Authority on 23rd October 2014.</p> <p>The EIA considers the equality implications associated with the proposed recommendations.</p> <p>Which are:</p> <p>The proposals for members to approve include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The recruitment process contained in the report b) The recruitment of firefighters under flexible contractual arrangements specified within the report – specifically combined 32 hour whole-time/42 hour whole -time retained contract (average over a 7 day period) c) That the feasibility of recruitment firefighters onto a 120 hour Retained Contract us explored in order to future proof recruitment and maximise flexibility d) The development of an apprenticeship model for future recruitment <p>The EIA is created to ensure the members are aware of the, and give due regard to the equality implications when considering the proposals.</p>	
2. Who will be affected by the policy/report/project?	
Future Recruits into MFRA	

3. Monitoring

Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include data which shows whether it is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.

What monitoring data have you considered?

There is no monitoring Data available in MFRA in relation to the proposals as these new to the organisation.

What did it show?

N/A- Future monitoring of Recruitment from application to employment will be carried out with Equality monitoring. The impact of the recruitment proposals will be monitored going forward around a variety of criteria including employee retention rates and service delivery standards to assess the impact of introducing the new contracts contained in these proposals

4: Research

Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include quantitative data and qualitative information; anything you have obtained from other sources e.g. CFA/CLG guidance, other FRSs, etc

What research have you considered?

FRS research and wider Employment /Recruitment Research into Retained contracts and reduced hour contracts

What did it show?

4.1 Very little evidence of any Equality Impact Assessments being conducted on this area, there is more information with regards to Retained Contracts that offer Zero hours. Evidence suggests that providing a guaranteed number of hours in a retained contract is much more favourable and that where possible, those being recruited onto retained contracts should be offered training, induction, appraisals and be closely monitored and supported to ensure they are not disadvantaged in anyway.

4.2 Transparency is key with all of the proposals in terms of making clear the scope of the role, the realistic number of hours available/guaranteed and the way hours are allocated is key to ensure there is no discrimination or bias towards any particular group and individuals are clear on the contract from the start of their employment.

	<p>4.3 Introduction of buddying system/mentoring would be advantageous specifically to those employees who may be posted on different watches and stations and not attached to any specific station to ensure they are getting the important support and induction into the organisations Values, culture, Policies and practices.</p> <p>4.4 Retained contracts and the ability to apply for future Whole-time roles should be explored and considered as a natural progression where possible and to encourage long term retention of those employees and reduce costs on re-recruitment and training</p> <p>4.5 The 32 hour contracts are considered sufficient to class as “living wage”, where additional hours would allow for individuals to gain more income it may not always be considered for financial assessments but would be included in any future FF pension calculations.</p> <p>4.6 Flexible working and reduced hours may be attractive to those with caring responsibilities, especially if there is opportunities to self-roster/select hours worked regularly.</p>
<p>5. Consultation</p> <p><i>Summarise the opinions of any consultation. Who was consulted and how? (This should include reference to people and organisations identified in section 2 above)</i></p> <p><i>Outline any plans to inform consultees of the results of the consultation</i></p>	
<p>What Consultation have you undertaken?</p> <p>Engagement and Consultation with Merseyside Public representing all groups of the community , conducted by Opinion Research Services(ORS) during in 2013/14 in order to consider options to deliver savings required as a result of Government cuts to Grant funding (CFO/011/14)</p>	<p>What did it say?</p> <p>ORS consultation identified that preferred options for dealing with structural changes to meet the reduced budget from central government included closures /mergers where possible.</p> <p>The mergers were predicated on the ability for MFRA to maintain whole-time crewing model rather than introducing a community retained alternative.</p> <p>No specific equality issues were identified with the consultation conducted.</p>

<p>Consultation with current workforce on expressions of interest for Whole-time retained working</p> <p>The logistics of introducing the proposals will need further consultation with staff and managers and the Diversity Action Group, should the Authority Members agree to them being adopted.</p>	<p>On two occasions Officers have sought expressions of interest for whole-time retained working within the current workforce and neither occasion were sufficient expressions received to crew one appliance.</p> <p>TBC</p>
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6. Conclusions

Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy/report/project impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups? (Include positive and/or negative impacts)

(a) Age

Proposals for Apprenticeships are age specific as the funding from Central Government is provided for those apprentices aged 16 to 24- often the age group in most need of training, education and employment. Although our recruitment practices won't directly discriminate against anyone over 24 applying for an apprenticeship, it is important to ensure that those applying meet the criteria set out in our apprenticeship roles.

(b) Disability including mental, physical and sensory conditions)

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposals contained in this Strategy impact Disabled people disproportionately. MFRA will consider disabled candidates on their ability to meet the recruitment and assessment standards to enable them to do their job as a Firefighter within the agreed national standards. Where reasonable adjustments can be made without compromising the assessment standards these will be considered during the application, assessment and selection processes.

(c) Race (include: nationality, national or ethnic origin and/or colour)

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposals impact people of different Races disproportionately.

A positive action programme has been conducted between July 2014 and October 2014 to highlight MFRA as a potential employer for BME candidates, and to encourage more applications from groups who are underrepresented at MFRA. The programme positively supports the proposals contained in this Recruitment Strategy.

(d) Religion or Belief

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposals impact people of different

religions or no religions disproportionately.
A positive action programme has been conducted between July 2014 and October 2014 to highlight MFRA as a potential employer for candidates from all religions or no religion, and to encourage more applications from groups who are underrepresented at MFRA. The programme positively supports the proposals contained in this Recruitment Strategy

MFRA will consider the religious needs of potential candidates and employees where practically possible during the recruitment process and into employment(e.g. religious observances in relation to food, prayer and religious events)

(e) Sex /Gender (includes considering Maternity/Paternity/Pregnancy /Gender reassignment ,marriage and civil partnerships)

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposals impact different genders disproportionately. There is some evidence to suggest that more flexible contracts in relation to reduced hours or self rostering may attract individuals that require flexibility for a work-life balance reasons and reasons of caring responsibilities.

A positive action programme has been conducted during July 2014 and October 2014 to encourage more Female candidates to consider and apply for future opportunities with MFRA to increase the number of Females.

(f) Sexual Orientation

No specific Equality Issues established

(g) Socio-economic disadvantage

The opportunity for employment is a positive for all potential recruits regardless of their social and economic background. The offer of reduced hour contracts and retained contracts may impact more negatively for those most disadvantaged economically who may need to be guaranteed Full time employment/income.

7. Decisions

If the policy/report/project will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how it will change or why it is to continue in the same way.

If no changes are proposed, the policy/report/project needs to be objectively justified as being an appropriate and necessary means of achieving the legitimate aim set out in 1 above.

There is no evidence that any of the recommendations contained within the strategy would have any adverse or negative effects upon any specific groups of people as described in section 7 a) to f) .

With regards to 7 g) – Social economic Disadvantage - further research on the proposals for 120 retained Hour contracts will be carried out and Equality Impacts will be considered where they arise. The opportunity to recruit new staff is positive for both MFRA and for those looking to be recruited into Firefighter roles, however there will be some negative impacts financially in relation to the ability for potential employees to use their employment contracts with MFRA as a main income to secure fiancé/mortgages etc.

As some of these recommendations are new to MFRA, there is a potential that certain groups may identify adverse effects and it will be necessary, through the consultation process, to manage any issues which arise fairly and consistently and to review the strategy on an annual basis.

8. Equality Improvement Plan

List any changes to our policies or procedures that need to be included in the Equality Action Plan/Service Plan.

9. Equality & Diversity Sign Off

The completed EIA form must be signed off by the Diversity Manager before it is submitted to Strategic Management Group or Authority.

Signed off by: Wendy Kenyon

Date: 21.10.14

Action Planned	Responsibility of	Completed by
Further Research into the impact 120 Hour retained contract proposals and impact on equality groups is needed before adoption.	POD /DCM	Before the proposals are implemented
Future Monitoring of Staff recruited on to alternative contracts will be conducted to assess any future equality impacts	POD/DCM	A year after recruitment

For any advice, support or guidance about completing this form please contact the DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk or on 0151 296 4237

The completed form along with the related policy/report/project document should be emailed to the Diversity Team at: DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk

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