

**To: All Members of the Performance & Scrutiny
Committee
(and any other Members who may wish to attend)**



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

The Protocol and Procedure for visitors attending meetings of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority can be found by clicking [here](#) or on the Authority's website:

<http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk> - About Us > Fire Authority.

Tel: 0151 296 4000
Extn: 4113 Kelly Kellaway

Your ref:

Our ref HP/NP

Date: 15 July 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE** to be held at **1.00 pm** on **THURSDAY, 23RD JULY, 2015** in the Liverpool Suite at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle.

Yours faithfully,

Clerk to the Authority

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

PERFORMANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 JULY 2015

AGENDA

Members

Councillors Robbie Ayres (Chair), Ray Halpin,
Jimmy Mahon, Barbara Murray, Jean Stapleton,
Sharon Sullivan and Lesley Rennie;
and Anthony Boyle (Independent Person)

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 5 - 10)

The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21st May 2015, are submitted for approval as a correct record and for signature by the Chair.

3. Forward Work Plan For The Performance & Scrutiny Committee For 2015/16 (Pages 11 - 22)

To consider Report CFO/066/15 of the Clerk to the Authority, concerning the draft Forward Work Plan (FwP) for the Performance & Scrutiny Committee for 2015/16.

4. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15 (Pages 23 - 68)

To consider Report CFO/063/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning the progress made against the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013/16.

5. **MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY (MFRA) ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS** (Pages 69 - 82)

To consider Report CFO/057/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning progress made in relation to staff engagement following the outcomes of the 2014 Staff Survey; and to introduce Members to the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority (MFRA) Engagement Principles.

6. **Performance Against New AFA Protocol** (Pages 83 - 116)

To consider Report CFO/064/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning performance of the new Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Policy since its introduction in October 2012.

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

PERFORMANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 MAY 2015

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Robbie Ayres, Roy Gladden, Barbara Murray, Jean Stapleton, Sharon Sullivan, and Lesley Rennie. And Anthony Boyle (Independent Person)

Also Present:

Apologies of absence were received from:
Ted Grannell (Chair)

APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER TO CHAIR THIS MEETING

Councillor Ayres put himself forward to chair the meeting. Councillor Jean Stapleton seconded his nomination. The committee voted unanimously in favour.

Resolved that

Councillor Ayres be appointed to preside over the meeting.

CHAIR'S ANNOUCEMENTS

Prior to the start of the meeting, information regarding general housekeeping and confirmation of the recording of proceedings was provided by the Chair to all in attendance.

The Chair then declared the meeting open and recording of the proceedings commenced.

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) no additional items of business to be considered as matters of urgency were determined by the Chair; 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 Meeting held on 19th March 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

3. Liverpool District Update Report 2014-15

Members considered Report CFO/040/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning performance of the Liverpool District against the objectives set within the Liverpool Community Safety Plan for 2014/15.

Members were provided with a presentation from Group Manager Ben Ryder, and the Liverpool District Management Team, concerning an overview of performance for Liverpool for 2014/15, partnership structures and how they are resourced; and a detailed case study. The presentation included input from Merseyside Police Chief Inspector Greg Lambert, who is the Strategic Partnerships Co-ordinator for Liverpool Basic Command Unit.

The presentation highlighted how the District performed during 2014/15 against some key performance indicators.

One area of concern identified, has been the number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) within the District. However overall, performance has been good with reductions observed in the number of accidental dwelling fires. These reductions have been achieved through using resources more efficiently, with staff delivering Home Fire Safety Checks to the most vulnerable across the whole District, not just limited to their specific station area.

Good performance was also observed in relation to the alert to mobile target, and speed and weight of response is deemed to be effective, with the target achieved in relation to confining fire to the room of origin.

The presentation highlighted that the population in Liverpool is up 2% and the City is the North West hub for asylum seekers. This particular demographic comes with complex needs which the Authority need to react to; and contribute to, working alongside partners.

In addition, all Liverpool Community Fire Stations are now established Safe Haven's, for vulnerable people seeking refuge.

Members were informed of recognition received in relation to the work undertaken under the Fire Fit brand, which has been recognised for best practice by the International Olympic Committee in a recent report.

The presentation also highlighted a recent partnership initiative with Odeon Cinemas in Liverpool, in which key fire and road safety messages were broadcast prior to screenings of Disney's "Planes Fire & Rescue". This was a particularly innovative initiative, which occurred as a result of the forward thinking of a member of MFRA staff.

The presentation highlighted the partnership structures in place and partnership work ongoing within the Liverpool District, around areas such as anti-social behaviour, hate crime and vulnerable victims. Such partnership working resulted in a reduction for 2014/15 of over 500 anti-social behaviour fires on the previous year.

In addition, the presentation provided Members with an overview of some of the potential implications to the Authority, of the Care Act 2015; and how the Authority can work with partners to make a significant contribution to the safeguarding of vulnerable older people moving forward.

The Committee also heard from Chief Inspector Greg Lambert of the value of joint working between MFRA and Merseyside Police.

Finally, Members were provided with a case study, which centred on the discovery of a large number of butane gas canisters within a flat, which were being used by the occupant as a drug. Members were shown footage highlighting the dangers associated with use of butane gas and the fire risks associated with the substance.

Members discussed at length the emerging problem of "legal highs" especially in relation to the increased risk of fire that some substances bring with them, and how awareness of the inherent risks might be highlighted to the communities of Merseyside.

Members resolved that:

- a) Performance in relation to the Liverpool District Stations, and Protection and Prevention Teams delivery against the Liverpool District Community Safety Plan, be noted.
- b) Officers be thanked for the very informative presentation and the fantastic work under taken within the Liverpool District.

4. SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2014/15 END OF YEAR UPDATE

Members considered report CFO/036/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer concerning performance against the objectives and the performance targets/outcomes as set out in the Service Delivery Plan 2014/15 for the period April 2014 to March 2015.

A presentation was provided, which gave an overview of the progress against the Authority's Service Delivery Plan. This covered Integrated Risk Management Plan Action Points, Functional Plan Actions, and Key Performance Indicators.

Members requested that information be provided concerning the causes of Accidental Dwelling Fires, as this would be useful in scrutinising prevention work. The Committee were informed that there is a great deal of information available, which can be provided to Members and brought to the attention of partners; and that this information reinforces what is known about individuals who are most at risk.

The Committee scrutinised the figures for RTCs and raised questions, such as whether it was realistic to have any targets, and what would take priority should there be a fire and an RTC at the same time.

Regarding the setting of targets, Members were informed that the Authority has a statutory duty to attend incidents where a life is at risk. Therefore it is appropriate to have targets to monitor incidents, to help inform where resources should be targeted in collaboration with partners. In terms of attendance at incidents, Members were informed that on most days, there will be both RTCs and fires occurring simultaneously, with data showing that the response standard is being met and both types of incident are being responded to effectively.

Members discussed the implications arising from the Care Act 2015, in relation to how the Fire and Rescue Service might play a wider role in the general health and wellbeing of the Community, in conjunction with and working alongside health and care providers. Members proposed inviting representatives from the health sector to a special meeting of this Committee to look at how they and the Authority might work together to address some of the issues arising from the Care Act 2015, moving forward.

Members resolved that:

- a) The Service Delivery Plan 2014/15 for the period April 2014 to March 2015 be noted and,
- b) Officers be requested to make the necessary enquiries and initiate steps to arrange a single purpose Performance and Scrutiny Committee to discuss the care agenda,
- c) Representatives from relevant partners and organisations, be invited to the single-purpose committee in resolution b) above.

5. Equality and Diversity (E and D) Action Plan 2013-16 Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 Progress Report for Year two activity with year end status

Members considered report CFO/037/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer concerning an update on the Quarter 3 and 4 progress with the Equality and Diversity (E&D) Action Plan 2013 -16 for all Year 2 Actions.

Members were informed that the Authority has received two awards in the past year: the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) National Fire and Rescue Service award for Positive Action with regards to its recruitment process; and the Matrix standard, awarded for work in relation to the provision of information to young people, through the Authority's youth engagement programmes.

Members were also provided with information concerning the use of Authority premises as "Safe Havens" and the occasions on which premises have been used for such a purpose.

In addition, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed Members of a change in language used when referring to non-operational staff, who will now be referred to as "Fire & Rescue Service Staff", as opposed to "support" or "green book" staff.

Information was also provided to Members around the recent firefighter recruitment; and discussion took place around opportunities for Members to meet with the new recruits. Members were informed that they would be invited to attend the recruit pass-out parade; and also that the recruits had been provided with a presentation around the role of the Authority as part of their training programme.

Members resolved that the level of progress made in Q3 and 4 and during the year, be noted.

6. Review of Injuries sustained as a result of operational activity year ending March 31st 2015

Members considered report CFO/031/15 of the Chief Fire Officer concerning performance data relating to operational staff injuries; resulting from an attendance at operational incidents and those as a result of training.

The committee scrutinised the number and types of injuries reported, in particular the high number of injuries caused by lifting; and asked how this was being addressed. Members were informed that lifting is integral to the role of a firefighter and consequently firefighters will, on occasion, suffer an injury as a result. However, Members were informed that all operational staff receive regular manual handling training, which is also intrinsic to all other training delivered.

Members resolved that the information contained within the report in relation to Health & Safety performance in the operational environment, be noted.

7. Standing Item: Forward Work Plan

Members considered the Forward Work Plan (FWP) of the Performance and Scrutiny Committee for 2014/15 and in particular those items that were completed and those which would carry over into next year's plan. Opportunity was given to discuss further items of scrutiny for the FWP 2015/16.

Resolved that:

- a) A report on the impact of Automatic Fire Alarm actuations be brought to the next meeting
- b) The Forward Work Plan for 2015/16 be agreed at the first meeting of this committee in the new municipal year.
- c) Work with health partners be included as a topic for scrutiny on the Forward Work Plan for 2015/16

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 23 July 2015

Signed: _____

Date: _____

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

REVIEW REPORT TO THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 JULY 2015

SUBJECT: FORWARD WORK PLAN FOR THE PERFORMANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR 2015/16

REPORT NUMBER: CFO/066/15

APPENDICES: APPENDIX A: DRAFT FORWARD WORK PLAN 2015/16

REPORTING OFFICER: CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: JANET HENSHAW

OFFICERS CONSULTED: KELLY KELLAWAY – DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members consider and approve the draft Forward Work Plan (FwP) for the Performance & Scrutiny Committee for 2015/16; and review the items included and proposed timescales for reporting.

Introduction and Background

2. For 2014/15, a structured FwP was devised for the Authority's Performance & Scrutiny Committee, which enabled items for scrutiny to be scheduled throughout the year.
3. When devising the FwP and reporting timescales, consideration was given to a range of factors including:
 - The relevance of the topic to MFRA business.
 - The scale of the topic and resources required.
 - Any work requiring completion prior to the scrutiny review.
 - The time required for the work to be completed.
4. This approach also involved the Authority's appointed Lead Members in the scrutiny process, by identifying which Lead Member and Support Officer would lead on each scrutiny item and be responsible for the production of reports or presentations to the Committee.

5. This added structure to the Lead Member process, providing those appointed Members with key areas to focus on throughout the year; and ensured that effective and structured scrutiny occurred, with meaningful outcomes, which added value and helped to inform decisions of the Authority.
6. However, given the increasing pressure that Officers are under and changes which occurred throughout the year, it has been necessary for some items within the FwP for 2014/15, to be deferred.
7. As such, the draft FwP for 2015/16 includes those items deferred from 2014/15, as well as additional items which have been requested for scrutiny at recent meetings of the Authority.
8. When devising the draft FwP for 2015/16, the same factors have been considered as for 2014/15; and responsible Lead Members and Support Officers have been identified to lead on each scrutiny item.
9. Members are asked to consider the draft FwP for 2015/16 (attached at Appendix A); and review the items included, identifying any items that they may wish to remove from the plan, or indeed any additional items they wish to be included.
10. Members are also asked to consider whether the timescales proposed for reporting back to the Performance & Scrutiny Committee, are appropriate.

Equality and Diversity Implications

11. There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report, however there may be implications for topics included within the FwP.
12. Equality and diversity issues in relation to any individual items of business within the plan will be considered; and equality impact assessments completed where necessary, when the item is reported on.

Staff Implications

13. The only direct staff implication in relation to this report will be in the requirement for Officers to participate in and support scrutiny reviews and produce informed reports.
14. There may be specific staff implications in relation to topics for scrutiny included within the FwP, which will be detailed fully when the outcome of the review is reported back to Members.

Legal Implications

15. Fire and Rescue Authorities are not required by law to provide scrutiny, however it is included in the Fire & Rescue Services National Framework 2012 as notable practice for Fire and Rescue Authorities to demonstrate transparency in relation to decisions made.
16. Having an agreed FwP for the Performance & Scrutiny Committee, will ensure that scrutiny remains aligned to the Authority's strategic direction and is conducted in a way which adds value.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

17. Although there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, financial implications are always considered when reporting to the Authority and when the Authority makes decisions.
18. As the financial challenges facing Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority looks set to continue for the foreseeable future, it is crucial that the Authority robustly scrutinises key issues, to provide clarity and aid the decision making process.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

19. There are no direct risks, or health and safety or environmental implications arising from this report.
20. However, effective scrutiny will assist the reduction of risk by enabling risks to be identified; and appropriate ways of mitigating those risks to be ascertained.

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

21. Given the scale of the financial challenge facing Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority, effective, robust scrutiny will ensure that the Authority continues to make the best possible decisions, to provide the best possible service to the public of Merseyside; and continues to deliver against its Mission.

Recommendation

22. That Members;
 - a) Consider the scrutiny reviews contained within the draft FwP and identify any amendments or additions they wish to make.
 - b) Confirm for each scrutiny review contained within the FwP:
 - i) The approach they wish to take.
 - ii) the date the review will be reported back to the Performance & Scrutiny Committee.
-

- iii) Whether a Task & Finish Group will be required to undertake the review.
- iv) Whether any further aspects of scrutiny are required in relation to the review.
- c) Following consideration of the above, set and approve the Forward Work Plan for the Performance & Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal Year 2015/16.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

FORWARD WORK PLAN FOR PERFORMANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2015/16

ITEM FOR SCRUTINY	REASON FOR SCRUTINY	DETAIL OF SCRUTINY	SCHEDULED FOR REPORTING	ASSOCIATED AUTHORITY AIMS	RESPONSIBLE LEAD MEMBER/ OFFICER
<p>Performance Against New AFA Protocol</p>	<p>To review performance against the new AFA Protocol and scrutinise the impact that the introduction of the new Policy has had on attendance at UwFS.</p>	<p>Report to be produced at the request of the Performance & Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the rationale underpinning the introduction of the Policy and the subsequent impact its introduction has had on attendance at UwFS and appliance availability.</p>	<p>Performance & Scrutiny Committee 23rd July 2015</p>	<p>Aim – Excellent Prevention & Protection</p>	<p>Lead Member for Community Risk Management – Cllr Jimmy Mahon</p> <p>AM James Berry – Community Risk Management</p>
<p>Fire & Health Exploring opportunities for collaboration.</p> <p>Understanding the potential implications of the Care Act 2015.</p>	<p>To scrutinise ways in which MFRA can work alongside partners from the health and care arena, to enable the Authority to play a wider role in the general health and wellbeing of the community; and mitigate some of the potential issues arising from the</p>	<p>Representatives from the health and care sectors, be invited to attend a special meeting of the Performance & Scrutiny Committee, to look at how they and the Authority might work together to address some of the issues arising from the Care Act 2015, moving forward.</p>	<p>Performance & Scrutiny Committee 3rd September 2015 (single status meeting)</p>	<p>Aim – Excellent Prevention & Protection</p>	<p>Lead Member for Community Risk Management – Cllr Jimmy Mahon</p> <p>AM James Berry – Community Risk Management</p>

	Care Act 2015 in relation to prevention activity and protecting the most vulnerable.				
Fire Control and the Mobilisation Process	To review the process for the mobilisation of resources to incidents	Requested by the Performance & Scrutiny Committee. Report to be produced in consultation with the relevant Lead Member regarding the mobilisation of the Authority's resources. The report be accompanied by a presentation to explain the mobilisation process and the role of Fire Control.	Performance & Scrutiny Committee 5th November 2015	Aim – Excellent Operational Preparedness	Lead Member for Operational Preparedness – Cllr Lesley Rennie AM Nick Searle – Operational Preparedness
Implementation of the Management Review	To scrutinise and monitor the implementation of the recent Management Review, to identify any shortfalls and issues regarding officer capacity.	Report to be produced regarding the implementation of the Management Review, to enable any shortfalls and any issues with regards to officer capacity to be identified.	Performance & Scrutiny Committee 5th November 2015	Relevant to all Aims	DCFO Phil Garrigan

ITEM FOR SCRUTINY	REASON FOR SCRUTINY	DETAIL OF SCRUTINY	SCHEDULED FOR REPORTING	ASSOCIATED AUTHORITY AIMS	RESPONSIBLE LEAD MEMBER/ OFFICER
<p>How effective is our Consultation Process?</p>	<p>To review our current consultation process and identify any possible improvements.</p>	<p>Report to be produced in consultation with the relevant Lead Member regarding the public consultation process in relation to the merger of Fire Stations, to enable any lessons learnt to be identified and considered for future consultations. To consider if any further scrutiny is required in this regard.</p>	<p>Performance & Scrutiny Committee 5th November 2015 (deferred from last year's FwP – awaiting conclusion of the Wirral Consultation process)</p>	<p>Aim – Excellent People</p>	<p>Lead Member Strategy & Performance – Cllr Barbara Murray</p> <p>Deb Appleton – Director of Strategy & Performance</p>
<p>Progress against Staff Engagement Commitments</p>	<p>To scrutinise how the Authority is progressing against its Staff Engagements Commitments, devised in response to some of the main issues raised by staff during the staff survey and focus groups</p>	<p>Report to be produced in consultation with the relevant Lead Member, to monitor progress against the Authority's Staff Engagement Commitments; and to enable Members to identify any further improvements/ avenues for engagement with staff.</p>	<p>Performance & Scrutiny Committee 12th January 2016</p>	<p>Aim – Excellent People</p>	<p>Lead Member Strategy & Performance – Cllr Barbara Murray</p> <p>Deb Appleton – Director of Strategy & Performance</p>

<p>How well do we work with our Partners?</p>	<p>To establish how well we work with our major partners and how our partnership arrangements can be sustained moving forward, following reductions in resources and changes to service delivery.</p>	<p>A report be produced highlighting the partnerships which add the most value to the work of the Authority and how well we work with those partners to achieve meaningful outcomes; and how the Authority can continue to facilitate those partnerships in the face of significant reductions in resources and changes to service delivery.</p>	<p>Performance & Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>12th January 2016</p> <p>(Deferred from last year's FwP and amended to reflect challenges in terms of facilitating partnerships, moving forward)</p>	<p>Relevant to all Aims</p>	<p>Involvement from all Lead Members and Support Officers</p>
<p>Implementation of New HR Policies</p>	<p>To monitor the implementation of the new suite of HR Policies and Procedures around Conduct and Capability; and scrutinise the impact that their introduction has had on absence levels.</p>	<p>Report to be produced in consultation with the relevant Lead Member, regarding the implementation of the new suite of HR Policies and Procedures around Conduct and Capability and highlighting the impact that their introduction may have had on absence levels.</p>	<p>Performance & Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>17th March 2016</p>	<p>Aim – Excellent People</p>	<p>Lead Member People & Organisational Development – Cllr Sharon Sullivan</p> <p>Director of People & Organisational Development – Nick Mernock</p>

STANDING ITEMS	REASON FOR SCRUTINY	DETAIL OF SCRUTINY	SCHEDULED FOR REPORTING	ASSOCIATED AUTHORITY AIMS	RESPONSIBLE LEAD MEMBER/ OFFICER
Function Updates (rotating)	To enable scrutiny of activity and performance within each of the following functions:	Reports and Presentations concerning Functional Updates to be provided at meetings as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Safety • Protection • Road Safety • Arson & ASB Reduction • Children & Young People • 	Performance & Scrutiny Committee 23 rd July 2015 5 th November 2015 12 th January 2016 17 th March 2016 19 th May 2016	Relevant to all Aims	Lead Member for Community Risk Management – Cllr Jimmy Mahon AM James Berry – Community Risk Management
Performance Update Against Service Delivery Plan	To enable regular scrutiny of performance against the Authority's Service Delivery Plan.	Reports and Presentations concerning to be provided at meetings as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Quarter • 2nd Quarter • 3rd Quarter • Final Year End Update 	Performance & Scrutiny Committee 5 th November 2015 12 th January 2016 17 th March 2016 19 th May 2016	Relevant to all Aims	Deb Appleton – Director of Strategy & Performance

Review Forward Work Plan	To ensure that the Forward Work Plan remains current and in line with the Strategic Direction of the Authority.	To be included as a Standing Item on each agenda of the Committee.		Relevant to all Aims	Performance & Scrutiny Committee

ANNUAL/ BI-ANNUAL ITEMS	REASON FOR SCRUTINY	DETAIL OF SCRUTINY	SCHEDULED FOR REPORTING	ASSOCIATED AUTHORITY AIMS	RESPONSIBLE LEAD MEMBER/ OFFICER
Progress Against Equality & Diversity Action Plan	To enable regular scrutiny of progress against the Equality & Diversity Action Plan.	Reports produced bi-annually, in consultation with the Lead Member for Strategy & Performance	Performance & Scrutiny Committee 12th January 2016 and 19th May 2016	Aim – Excellent People	Lead Member – Strategy & Performance – Cllr Barbara Murray Deb Appleton – Director of Strategy & Performance
Environmental Performance	To enable regular scrutiny of performance in relation to Environmental targets.	Reports produced bi-annually, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance, Assets & Efficiency	Performance & Scrutiny Committee 17th March 2016	Relevant to all Aims	Lead Member Finance, Assets & Efficiency – Cllr Jean Stapleton John McNeil – AM: Strategic Change and Resources
Health, Safety & Welfare Annual Report	To enable regular scrutiny of performance in relation to Health, Safety and Welfare matters.	Report produced annually/ bi-annually, in consultation with the Lead Member for Operational Response (whose remit covers Health and Safety)	Performance & Scrutiny Committee 5th November 2015	Relevant to all Aims	Lead Member Operational Response – Cllr Ray Halpin AM Dave Mottram – Operational Response

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

PERFORMANCE REPORT TO THE

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 JULY 2015

SUBJECT: EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT
2014/15

REPORT NUMBER: CFO/063/15

APPENDICES: APPENDIX A: (DRAFT EQUALITY & DIVERSITY
ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15)

REPORTING OFFICER: DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: DEB APPLETON

OFFICERS CONSULTED: WENDY KENYON

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with an update on the progress made against the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013/16 as contained in **Appendix 1 the Equality and Diversity (E & D Annual report 2014/15)**

Introduction and Background

2. The Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2014/15 updates stakeholders on the key outcomes delivered in year with regards to Equality and Diversity. The report has been developed using the Quarterly Progress reports which are presented to the Strategic Equality Group which also include progress on the Authority's Equality Objectives. The report supports the requirement to publish E&D information at least annually to demonstrate to the public the commitment of the Authority to the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED) in removing disadvantage, discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and supporting diversity as an Employer and Fire and Rescue Service provider.
3. The report is an opportunity to celebrate the good work that has been delivered across all functions of the Authority throughout the year and also recognises

diversity in action across the districts in the form of case studies. The case studies included relate to activities/events which have taken place during 2014/15. Officers are also gathering case studies and photographs as events take place this year which will be included in next year's report.

4. The Annual Report is split into two sections; Section 1 focuses on introducing the Annual Report, a round-up of the current performance and progress towards the Authority's five Equality Objectives as of the end of 2014/5. It also provides examples of good practice against the Authority's four key aims; Excellent Response, Excellent Prevention & Protection, Excellent Operational Preparedness and Excellent People. Section 2 outlines some of the key standards the Authority works to and highlights the diversity events that have taken place during year one of the Action plan.
5. It is intended that the Annual Report, once signed off by the Authority, is developed further with the inclusion of photographs and quotations and developed into a smart but cost effective annual report, using the same format as last year's report. A small number of reports will be printed professionally and issued to Members and key partners but mainly the report will be available for staff to read on the Portal and for stakeholders on the external website.

Equality and Diversity Implications

6. The Equality and Diversity Annual Report supports the Authority with its legal obligation to provide evidence of how it meets the provisions of the Equality Act and in particular shows due regard to the needs of the nine protected groups.

Staff Implications

7. The Equality and Diversity Annual Report deals with the diversity of the Authority's workforce, which Members have already considered at a previous Performance and Scrutiny Committee.
8. A significant amount of staff have engaged with the development of this report through a number of methods from attending the Diversity Action Group and Strategic Equality Group meetings to attending the dedicated Equality forums such as the Female Firefighter forum. Further research has also too place talking to staff about their ideas for inclusion in this report.
9. The Strategic Management Group will undertake briefings (an outcome of the engagement commitments) in order to share the content of report with all MFRA staff and stakeholders.

Legal Implications

10. The Equality and Diversity Annual Report demonstrates the work that is being conducted to meet the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty requirements

Financial Implications & Value for Money

11. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
12. The cost of the design and printing of the Equality and Diversity Annual Report is contained within existing budgets.
13. The Equality and Diversity Annual Report will be designed to include relevant photographs and quotations and care will be taken to ensure that it is a smart and professional, but cost effective document. A small number of reports will be printed professionally and issued to Members and key partners but mainly the report will be available for staff to read on the Portal and for stakeholders on the external website.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

14. There are no risk management, health & safety or environmental implications arising from this report. The Annual Report does show that considerations are made in relation to the different needs of staff to ensure that disabilities are supported with reasonable adjustments and thus makes staff safe in their working environment.

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

15. All of the Annual Report contributes to the Mission and the design of the report provides specific progress against the four key aims.

Recommendation

16. That Members note the content of the Equality and Diversity Annual Report for publication which will take place after professional design work has taken place.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

17.
CFO/117/14 Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-16 Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 progress report for year two activity
CFO/037/15 Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-16 Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 progress report for year two activity with year-end status

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

DAG	Diversity Action Group
SEG	Strategic Equalities Group
E and D	Equality and Diversity
HFSC	Home Fire Safety Check

MFRA Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority is the physical and legal entity. In writing reports MFRA is the “object”.

MFRS Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service is the service provided by MFRA.
In writing reports MFRS is the “action”

PSED Public Sector Equality Duty
SEG Strategic Equality Group
SMG Strategic Management Group

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
Equality and Diversity Annual Report
April 2014 to March 2015

Alternative Formats

We are committed to ensuring that all our information is fully accessible for all communities across Merseyside, we have included this document on our website which can be accessed from our Webpage <http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/equality & diversity>

We also provide a free speech, reading and translation service using BrowseAloud to help people who require online reading support access our documents, this can be located on the front page, top left of our website by clicking the button called "listen with Browse aloud" If you would like a copy in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French or Somali please contact us at Diversity Team, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Bridle Road , Bootle, Liverpool L30 4YD. Telephone 0151 296 4422 or email diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk.

Arabic

Diversity : الاتصال يرجى ، الصومالية أو ، الفرنسية أو ، الصينية أو ، البنغالية أو ، العربية باللغة نسخة أردت إذا : على بنا
على بنا
Team, MF&RS Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle, Liverpool, L30 4YD والمينيكوم الهاتف
diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk 4422 أو البريد الإلكتروني 296 0151
كبيرة طباعة بحروف أيضًا متوفر

Bengali

আপনি আরিব, বাংলা একটি কিপ চান, চীনা, ফরাসি বা সোমালি করুন যোগাযোগ ডাইভারসিটি দল
আমাদের, MF & আরএস সদর, রশ্মি েরাড, Bootle, লিভারপুল L30 4YD. টেলিফোন এবং মিনি কম
0151 296 4355 বা ইমইল diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk. বৃহত্তর মুদ্রণ এছাড়াও
উপলব্ধ।

Chinese

如果你想复制的阿拉伯语, 孟加拉语, 中国, 法国或索马里, 请联系 我们多元化的团
队, MF & RS总部, 马勒路, 布特尔, 利物浦L30 4YD。 电话和小型机0151 296
44422 或电邮diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk。 在较大的打印也可以。

French

Si vous souhaitez obtenir une copie en arabe, bengali, chinois, contactez s'il vous
plaît français ou en Somalie nous à la diversité équipe, siège de MF & RS, Bridle
Road, Bootle, Liverpool L30 4YD. Téléphone et minicom 0151 296 4422 ou par
courriel diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk. Egalement disponible en gros caractères.

Somali

Haddii aad rabtid nuqul Carabi, Bangaali, Shinees, Faransiis ama Soomaali fadlan
la xiriir kooxda Diversity, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, Headquarters Service
Bridle Road, Bootle Liverpool L30 4YD.
Telefoonka: 0151 296 4422 ama Email: diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk
Sidoo Kale waxaa heli kartaa iyadoo far waaweyn ah.

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Foreword

I am pleased to share with you our second Equality and Diversity Annual report, which highlights our progress and achievements against the Equality and Diversity Action Plan and Objectives. The report provides a wealth of information against our core aims of; Excellent Operational Preparedness, Excellent Operational Response, Excellent Prevention and Protection, Excellent People.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority's (MFRA) vision has always been broad and challenging, we have been at the forefront of innovation, looking at new ways to deliver our commitment to Equality and Diversity, whilst working with decreasing resources. I am particularly pleased with our work around Positive Action for the recent firefighter recruitment exercise, and we have developed a sound approach to broadening participation in the application process. This has resulted in us attracting staff from under-represented groups, helping us to be more reflective of the communities we serve.

We have been commended for our excellent commitment to Equality and Diversity, winning two awards this year, the first being the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) National Fire Service (FRS) award for our work on Positive Action, and the second was the recent award of the Matrix standard for our Youth Engagement programmes, where Equality and Diversity was singled out as being integral and embedded across all aspects of youth programmes delivered at MFRA.

Like much of the Public Sector, we are facing very challenging times, with further reductions in budgets inevitable. This requires us to consider our priorities very carefully, but rest assured, the progress made on our Equality and Diversity agenda thus far will continue to figure highly among the Authority's priorities.

**Deputy Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan,
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
Photograph 1 – Deputy Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan**

Welcome

As Authority Lead for Strategy and Performance, I have responsibility for Equality and Diversity throughout the Service. During 2014-15 I have worked closely with the Diversity Consultation Manager to ensure that we are embracing and promoting equality throughout the organisation; sharing best practice within the districts of Merseyside and continually challenging ourselves to improve by removing any barriers to becoming an outstanding employer.

We have now completed year two of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-16 and I can report that not only is the plan performing better than the targets in most areas but it is becoming embedded in the Service and is having a very positive impact on performance and outcomes. This includes the excellent work around our positive action and recruitment of firefighters and new apprentices.

I have attended Diversity Action Group (DAG) meetings throughout the year and was really pleased in April to attend the Review and Planning day. The latter convinced me, through conversations with staff from all departments, that the commitment of the staff to Equality and Diversity is second to none.

Our challenge going forward continues to be maintaining the highest standards with diminishing resources. I believe the key to maintaining positive outcomes lies in good communications and creative problem solving. We are listening closely to the residents of Merseyside and our staff as we forward plan for future years and we will endeavour to maintain high quality services that are appropriate to the communities we serve and the staff we employ.

I hope you find this report useful and that we have presented the information in a meaningful way. We would welcome any feedback you may have with respect to the report and we are keen to develop further partnerships with other organisations to improve outcomes for the people of Merseyside with respect to fire, safety and rescue. For more information or to initiate talks please do not hesitate to contact me at Barbara.Murray@liverpool.gov.uk.

Councillor Barbara Murray – Authority Lead Member for Equality and Diversity 2014/15.

Photograph 2 - of Cllr Barbara Murray

Introduction

This report provides us with an opportunity to celebrate some of our many success stories in relation to our achievements around the Equality and Diversity agenda in support of our diverse communities over the last financial year (April - March).

The Service has a long established commitment to Equality and Diversity, giving responsibility for its achievement to everyone connected with the organisation. Equality and Diversity is well embedded throughout the organisation and can be evidenced in our work across our core aims. It is driven by a comprehensive and well monitored Equality and Diversity Action Plan underpinned by an Equality and Diversity Policy. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are carried out on policy and strategic documents and published with Authority papers.

This report also provides an internal reflection on the Diversity work that has been delivered. As an employer it is important that we are embedding Equality and Diversity to achieve fairer outcomes for all our staff.

This report also demonstrates our commitment to meeting the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in relation to:

1. Publishing, at least annually, information to demonstrate our compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED.
2. Prepare and Publish one or more specific and measurable objectives that helps to achieve the Aims set out in the PSED.
3. Publish equality information and the objectives in a manner that is accessible to the public.

Governance and Performance Management

Delivery of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan is led by the Diversity and Consultation Manager and co-ordinated through our Departmental and Senior Managers and our Diversity Action Group (DAG). The DAG is made up of departmental representatives (and is supported by the Authority Lead Member for Equality and Diversity) meeting quarterly to discuss and monitor progress against the action plan objectives. The DAG is also critical in reviewing equality impacts in relation to MFRA's services, policies, and projects through a robust Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

The Diversity and Consultation Manager also holds regular Equalities engagement meetings with the Representative Bodies (trade unions and staff associations), to ensure that they are aware of the Equality and Diversity developments and have an opportunity to contribute to the consideration of the ways in which Equality and Diversity influences the provision of fire and rescue services.

Performance against the Equality and Diversity Action Plan is scrutinised at two levels. The first is through the Strategic Equality Group (SEG), which is chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and made up of senior managers representing all departments of the organisation. It meets on a quarterly basis to review progress

made and provide assurances to the Authority on that progress. The second level of scrutiny is through the Authority's Performance and Scrutiny Committee made up of Elected Members who review MFRA's Equality and Diversity progress on a six-monthly basis.

Authority members have received EIA training to support their scrutiny role and help with approving significant decisions on changes to services provided by the Authority. There is also a lead Member of Authority role that looks at the ongoing development of Equality and Diversity across the Service. Cllr Barbara Murray is currently serving in this role.

Reports to the Performance and Scrutiny committee are made public via the MFRA website: www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/pages/fire_auth/authorityContent.aspx

Our Equality Objectives

Equality Objectives 2014/15

Equality Objective 1

In the past ten years Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MF&RS) 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

During 2014/15, MF&RS attended 1,050 accidental dwelling fires. This is 103 fewer incidents than during 2013/14. When compared to both the E&D target of 1,136 and Service Plan target of 1,170, this reflects good performance for 2014/15.

The use of Customer Insight and more specifically the Vulnerable Person's Index will ensure a more targeted approach to Home Fire Safety Check visits allowing us to identify the most high risk and vulnerable people who have never previously received a visit from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service. Data sharing agreements with partner agencies allow us to intelligently target those most at risk of fire.

The resultant qualitative Home Fire Safety Checks will ensure that people are given the relevant home safety advice and that every contact with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service counts.

Please note data is correct as of 13/04/2015. Late fire report submissions and quality assurance can affect this number.

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

By the end of Quarter 4 2014/15 there had been a total of 183 Accidental Dwelling Fires in Registered Social Landlord (RSL) properties. This was 36 (-19%) fewer incidents than at the end of 2013/14.

Close working partnerships formed with registered providers has allowed us to identify high risk and vulnerable tenants and deliver appropriate interventions to reduce the risk of fire in the kitchen and home. Also the introduction of assistive technology will allow the installation of safety equipment such as Wi-Fi heat alarms and cooker isolation switches to reduce the risk in the kitchen even further to those with special requirements.

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

There were a total of 3,917 deliberate secondary fires attended during 2014/15, this is 1,210 fewer incidents (-23.6%) than in 2013/14.

When compared to the projected E&D target of 5,767 incidents attended by the end of 2017/18 this target has been achieved for the 4th year in succession.

Through an intelligence-led risk management approach, we will continue to identify arson and anti-social behaviour (ASB) hotspots and reduce secondary fires through education and engaging with our partner agencies. We also have plans in place to deploy our resources efficiently during spate conditions such as summer grass fires. Identifying known local high risk periods, such as Bonfire and the summer months, we make specific plans to ensure that our communities receive a quality service

around the reduction of risk in our communities.

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 safe 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

RTCs and resultant injuries and fatalities have not met the E&D targets for 2014/15. There were 958 more RTCs during 2014/15 than in the previous year.

Work is ongoing to understand why the number of RTCs and injuries in RTCs have risen so much during this year. This includes devising data sharing protocols with Merseyside Police to obtain additional data to allow further insight into who might be the type of people involved in these incidents.

We continue to deliver road safety advice to young people in schools and colleges.

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: To increase the diversity of our workforce and volunteers in order to reflect the local community we serve and increase applications for roles within the organisation (including volunteering) for those protected groups under-represented currently within our workforce.

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 will work to encourage applications from under-represented groups when we carry out any recruitment.

Current progress

Data has been collated to look at two main characteristics, gender and ethnicity, for two recruitment programmes completed during 2014/15 - Apprenticeships and Firefighter recruitment. The data below can be considered as the Benchmark to measure against going forward.

**Apprenticeships: 12 recruited - Gender: 7 male (58%) and 5 Female (42%)
Ethnicity: 11 White British (92%) and 1 BME: 1 (8%)**

**Firefighter Recruitment: 16 Recruited - Gender: 13 Male (81%) and 3 Female (19%)
Ethnicity: 14 White British (87.5%) and 1 BME (6.25%) and 1 prefer not to say (6.25%).**

A further detailed report is currently being compiled by the Positive Action Team with support from the Diversity and Consultation Manager to provide a fuller Equality Impact Assessment for all stages of recruitment.

(Photo of New Recruits)

Part One – Equality and Diversity Activities and Outcomes 2014/15

Equality and Diversity Activity and Outcomes 2014- 2015

Our Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-16 identifies key objectives and actions designed to ensure that we continuously improve against our diversity agenda and deliver against our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirements and Equality Objectives.

The Action Plan is a living document which sets out our actions in relation to Equality and Diversity for each of the Authority's Corporate Aims. The plan spans three years and progress is monitored on a quarterly and six-monthly basis. Having the Action Plan in place ensures that: We have a transparent means by which we can demonstrate our commitment to Equality and Diversity (in relation to our staff and our communities) in a way that allows interested parties to hold us to account and measure our progress in relation to:

- The extent to which our services meet differing customer needs.
- The extent to which we are able to attract, retain and develop a talented workforce from across all sections of the community.

This part of the report focuses on the key outcomes delivered in the second year of our Action Plan, including case studies which help bring the Action Plan to life. In addition, this section provides information on who we have delivered some of our key services to in relation to the demography of Merseyside and also the make-up of our workforce and the extent to which that reflects the local demography.

To demonstrate how Equality and Diversity is mainstreamed and embedded across the organisation, progress has been documented using the four key organisational aims; Excellent Operational Preparedness, Excellent Operational Response, Excellent Prevention and Protection and Excellent People.

Excellent Operational Response

“To maintain an excellent emergency response to meet risk across Merseyside, with safety and effectiveness at its core.”

Support for an ageing workforce

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service is committed to the development and maintenance of a fit and healthy workforce to meet the requirements placed on the Service and the physical demands involved with delivering safe, effective fire and rescue services.

MFRA has an ageing profile with 55.5%¹ of its uniformed/ operational staff aged over 45, this requires the organisation to ensure it tailors its support for staff to enable them to maintain their fitness to deliver safe effective fire and rescue services.

The Occupational Health team is dedicated to developing and maintaining a healthy workforce by emphasising the importance of physical fitness and an employee's ability to carry out their role within a risk critical and, at times, highly demanding environment.

The following measures have been introduced by MF&RS and the Occupational Health Department to assist all employees in achieving, maintaining and improving their level of physical fitness;

- A safe environment for training in compliance with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
- Physical Training Equipment available at all fire stations and other working locations.
- Provision of a Service Health and Fitness Advisor and a team of Fitness Advisors, available for advice and guidance on any health, fitness and wellbeing issues required, appropriate to the role.
- Introduction of dedicated fitness period has been included in the firefighters' work routine to allow staff time to keep and maintain fitness levels.
- Information on fitness training circuits and programmes that accommodate the training needs for staff with varying levels of fitness, age, gender and experience in the use of gym equipment are provided. These programmes are supported by national information that is available on the Chief Fire Officers Association FireFit Steering Group website. The information is accessible to all via online learning and the Service intranet.
- Advice on all aspects of wellbeing, health and fitness is available from the Occupational Health Team, especially where rehabilitation is required following illness or injury.
- Non-operational employees will be offered the same health support as operational staff to ensure that they are fit and healthy for their role.

¹ Data taken from the DCLG return for 2104/15

Making Community Consultation Accessible

During the past year we have undertaken a number of Public Consultation events concerning the changes to our operational services required to help save £6.3 million in 2015/16. The Authority has identified the need to save £3.4 million from our emergency response budget which has necessitated the need to consider station closures and mergers. Public consultation has been carried out ensuring that all parts of the community can access information on the proposals, this included making sure the public venues were accessible, providing information in alternative formats and providing a British Sign Language interpreter and a hearing loop at each meeting. The public were also able to provide their views via an online or paper survey. The consultation also considered the needs of those diverse community groups who are most affected by the changes using the Equality Impact Assessment process.

Reaching Diverse Communities

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority recognises that Merseyside is made up of people from many diverse communities and as such created the Community Diversity Forum. The forum is a register of community groups, charities, organisations and individuals from across Merseyside, from as many different and diverse backgrounds as possible. The register will allow us to select people from different areas/backgrounds to be involved in our consultation process throughout the year. The members are also invited to attend up to four meetings a year to discuss various topics.

As part of our March Meeting members were also given a tour of our Heritage and Education Centre.

Supporting our Female Firefighters

Female firefighters make up 3.1% of the total firefighter population across the UK. At MFRA our proportion of females in firefighting roles is 5%. Women were first formally employed in a Fire and Rescue Service during peacetime in 1982 with the first female firefighter employed at London Fire Brigade. Since then there have been many developments to support women in the fire service, from ensuring equipment is suitable, to providing relevant facilities on stations. In order to understand the female firefighter experience on Merseyside we have provided a dedicated forum to ensure that women in the Service have a voice to express any concerns and to raise the profile of the important work females firefighters contribute to the Service.

Ruth Cooke FBU Women's Representative said *"I am really pleased that the service has provided an opportunity for female firefighters to come together and to discuss matters that are meaningful to their role within the Service. We have been able to provide feedback to enable improvements to facilities on fire stations and at our Training and Development Academy as well as highlighting the need for greater*

consideration when purchasing equipment, uniforms and breathing apparatus to support different genders.”

The forum is also working with women who want to progress within the organisation through targeted mentoring and training. This will be a key feature going forward in the next phase of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan.

After the Incident Leaflets

A project has been carried out by our Operational Response Team to design and develop an “After the Incident” leaflet. The leaflet is aimed at providing valuable guidance for members of the public affected by fire. One of the main concerns was that the information must be accessible to all communities. The leaflets are now available in different languages and online as read aloud version for those with visual impairments.

Excellent Prevention and Protection

“To 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.”

Fire Safety Legislation

Our Protection team has been developing a business support strategy to establish the types of support the Service can offer to help business owners within the Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Communities. It is important for our staff to have a clear understanding of what our communities need. The aim of the strategy is to ensure that all business owners have a clear understanding of the work we do and the importance of Enforcement and Prosecution and Fire Safety Advice. To support this area of work a conference is being held in September 2015 by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority to encourage the sharing of notable practice and to establish what barriers Fire and Rescue Services have encountered when supporting businesses from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities.

Specialist Fire Safety Support

Our District Prevention Team have developed a Holistic approach to Home Fire Safety Checks, by ensuring that each Home Fire Safety Check is tailored to an individual's needs.

One example is a referral that was received for a gentleman who was registered blind and deaf and required focused fire safety advice and support as part of our Service's work to protect those who are more vulnerable if a fire were to occur where they live.

The man lived in a flat in an independent living facility and over six years had had seven separate instances when he had set off the smoke alarms due to either smoking habits or unsafe cooking.

The man required a particular type of interpreter who scribes on the palm of his hand, known as Hands on Signing. Fire Safety Advice had been given in the past utilising the previous independent living facility manager's ability to use Hands on Sign.

Advocate Chris Murphy, from the Liverpool North Prevention Team, said: “After the man had two incidents close together, it was decided by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and the current independent living facility manager that he required some more, fresh fire safety advice. Also it was deemed beneficial to involve the man's sister who was visiting Merseyside at this time, Social Services and the Merseyside Society for Deaf People (MSDP), who all provide support for the man.

“A meeting was held to consider the Fire and Rescue Service’s concerns and discuss what could be done to assist the man. Working together with the Equality and Diversity team at the Service, I was able to provide a ‘Hands On’ signing interpreter and so Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service was able to communicate specific advice to the man on how to reduce the risk of fire within the home and establish a speedy and effective signal for firefighter communication to the man in case he needed to evacuate the flat.

Operational crews have been informed about the sign/signal required to be given to the man in the event of an emergency or evacuation so he will understand and comply with physical direction.”

Chris added: “Due to our work, the man has a greater understanding of the dangers of fire in the home and how to reduce the risk of an incident. He now knows how a firefighter will communicate with him should the need arise for him to be moved or evacuated in the event of a fire.

“Fire retardant equipment, including a fire retardant throw and metal bin, have been issued to help reduce the risk of fires starting involving cigarettes. Other partners are also looking at arranging for newer cooking appliances to be used at the flat to make it easier for the man to use these to cook food.”

The interpreter who visited the man as part of the Home Fire Safety Check was found by the Merseyside Society for Deaf People.

Youth Engagement and Prince’s Trust

The Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Youth Engagement team welcomes those children and young people who are not always fully represented and to that end we have engaged with several same sex couples, young people with sometimes multifaceted needs such as ADHD & Asperger’s Syndrome.

Karen Metcalf, Youth Engagement Manager, added “Staff have received guidance on how to support young people with a disability to help manage their needs and expectations to make their time on the youth programmes as inclusive as possible. We are really proud of our achievements.” For further information on what our Prince’s Trust teams do and how they help young people, please read Elly’s speech from her presentation evening on page 38.

In September, our Bootle/Netherton Prince’s Trust team had two team members who had Cerebral Palsy. We ensured the necessary risk assessments were in place which in turn allowed them to take part fully in the programme which included the five-day activity residential.

This year has seen our Huyton Prince’s Trust team have a cohort of approximately 25% of their members from the LGBT community.

Prevention staff have supported the work of the youth teams with securing work placements and apprenticeships with the Chamber of Commerce for Prince’s Trust and cadets.

The Beacon teams are young people aged 8 to 14 years-old. The primary school children are young people who are lacking confidence and suffer from acute shyness. The programme's aim is to build the children's self-assurance to make that transition into secondary school. The groups had a mix of young people who had Epilepsy, Asthma, ADHD and other learning difficulties.

A teacher said: "Staff worked brilliantly by keeping the day flowing – involving all pupils and making the day both fun & disciplined. Pupils who are normally shy/withdrawn/feel left out, are becoming more confident. The Pupils have gained a lot of knowledge for future life skills and the confidence shown on the course and back at school from pupils is brilliant."

Fire Cadets

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service have run two cadet programmes for a number of years but have this year become involved with a National programme managed through Youth United. Merseyside won funding for the delivery of Fire Cadets in two Merseyside areas Liverpool and Formby. The project is being run nationally with schools from across the country and is aimed at engaging with young people who already engage or attend schools where after school activities are prominent. The schools taking part in the programme with MF&RS are Formby High School where we have had applicants from 5 boys and 15 girls and Archbishop Blanch Church of England School for girls where we received 58 applications. Due to the location, Archbishop Blanch has a fantastic mix of ethnicity. The course is being delivered by our youth engagement team and individual firefighters as part of their community engagement.

Hate Crime

Safe Havens have been introduced to all community fire stations in Liverpool and Sefton to help protect people when they are at their most vulnerable. Community Fire Stations across Liverpool and Sefton are now designated as Safe Havens for members of the public who feel threatened, intimidated or at risk.

Safe Havens are easily identified by an illuminated sign on the stations that can be seen at night. If firefighters are not at the station, people can still call for assistance for an emergency situation by using the yellow emergency phone box located at the front of the building, below the Safe Haven signs.

The Safe Havens also provide people with the opportunity to report hate crime or domestic violence should they feel that this action is appropriate

Safe Havens have been formally activated on 11 occasions, with a total of 14 people attending stations for safety. Eleven were adults and 3 were children, with 11 males and 3 females. The information below highlights the reasons why people have found the need to find a safe haven:

2 x Homeless and frightened
Assault –sought refuge
Person in pain with bruising
Vehicle attacked by youths
Person feeling suicidal
Seeking help after hospital discharge
2 people chased by group
Male lost
Female with no abode
Child being hit at home.

Quote

Watch Manager Marvin Yates, from Bootle and Netherton Community Fire Station said: “Four youths were attacking a car with 3 people in it. They pulled into the fire station and asked for help. The Youths made off through the park. We brought the family in and made them safe and comfortable. We found out that the male in the car had had his bike stolen at knife point earlier in the day by the same youths. They saw him in the car and tried to attack it with stones.”

In February 2015 our Arson Reduction co-ordinator joined Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner to launch the “Love not Hate” campaign ahead of Valentine’s Day. The campaign urges people not to suffer in silence and encourages victims to contact Merseyside Police or, if they don’t feel confident speaking to the police, to get in touch with Stop Hate UK. The Charity has been funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner to deliver an independent confidential 24/7 helpline for victims across Merseyside.

Three of our fire appliances in Knowsley have been branded to support the Choices campaign against Domestic abuse, which is part of the Safer Knowsley Partnership Domestic Violence Campaign. As part of the high profile campaign, fire appliance have been branded with the message “Domestic abuse – it’s all about Choices” and the support line contact number. As well as fire appliances, the message has also been seen on taxis, buses and roadside adverts across the area. As part of the national [White Ribbon campaign](#) against domestic violence all of our fire appliances wore a White Ribbon. (Photo)

Road Safety

One of our Equality Objectives is to reduce the number of road traffic collisions on our roads across Merseyside, targeting specific groups, the young and the old. Road safety campaigns took place throughout the summer across the Liverpool District. In August, firefighters staged two car rescue demonstrations to show the public the use of special hydraulic equipment. Staff from the ODEON Liverpool were also at the event. To help highlight safety messages, a short film by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service was shown during the trailers before films, including Disney’s

Planes 2: Fire and Rescue. This is an excellent way to target families and young people to provide safety messages in a cost effective way.

Further road safety events were staged in a supermarket car park in Hunts Cross, where firefighters used hydraulic cutting equipment to remove a car roof to show how we help paramedics to move people following collisions where spinal or neck injuries are suspected or confirmed.

As part of the summer campaign by MF&RS, cyclists are urged to be seen and be safe by wearing high-visibility clothing and a helmet.

Pedestrians were urged to look out, listen and be aware and motorcyclists were also advised to ensure they stay hydrated, particularly during the summer, as dehydration can affect concentration and reaction times.

There have been other road safety events held throughout Merseyside at different times of the year. One included a rescue demonstration at Calday Grange Grammar School, in Wirral, which was followed by a 10-week programme of RTC reduction presentations to the entire sixth form at the school.

Healthy Homes Knowsley

Healthy Homes Knowsley was launched in September 2013 and since then 3,200 homes have been visited as part of the initiative, which aims to improve both the living conditions and health and wellbeing of residents. This has resulted in over 1,000 referrals to other agencies including referrals for energy efficiency advice, smoke alarms and housing issues. The Healthy Homes Project is delivered in partnership with MF&RS and we have assisted in their training, supplied co-branded uniforms, a Service vehicle and have a District Prevention Advocate working with the team one day a week. As part of the initial service, the Healthy Homes team will carry out a short fire safety check. If there are any high levels of risks identified the details will be passed to our district team to carry out a full HFSC.

Healthy Homes aims to tackle common issues that residents may be experiencing, such as living in damp conditions, having difficulty managing household bills or disabled residents struggling to get around without adaptations to their home. These can all have a significant impact on health, wellbeing and general happiness.

Summer Family Fun Day

An event was held in the grounds of the Seacombe Children's Centre which attracted more than 300 people.

The event was aimed at young people with the intention of helping reduce the number of accidental and deliberate fires involving grass, rubbish, bonfires and fly-tipped material. The event was also aimed at providing information to the community on wellbeing, lifestyle and fitness.

The event was attended by MF&RS with one of the quad bikes which we use at community events and for specific campaigns such as Beachsafe on the Sefton coastline. Children were able to sit on the quad bike, while people received information on how to help reduce fires. Merseyside Police were also there registering bicycles to help prevent bike thefts and help return them to their owners if they are stolen.

There was a number of partners at the event offering a wide range of advice including the NHS offering Health Checks, Debt advice to young families and support to pregnant women.

There was also a range of fun activities including the MF&RS smoothie bike, making healthy fruit smoothies, and a Build a Butty stall offering tips on how to make a health snack. Entertainment on the day was provided by the Hoylake Hand and Voice Choir, who performed four songs in British Sign Language.

Excellent Operational Preparedness

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

Learning and Assessment

Work is ongoing on a review of our Training and Development Academy looking at all training delivery and assessment processes carried out by our staff. A review of core activities has already been started with staff looking at our Station Training Planner Activities to establish if they are supporting our diverse groups of staff and to ensure that the processes are fair and transparent. The areas being reviewed are focused on training, learning and assessment of firefighters which includes the below:

The first Training & Development Academy Equality and Diversity educational workshop was delivered to key staff in March 2015. The workshop is in two stages. Stage one is to provide staff with the knowledge about the Equality Act 2010. This includes the responsibilities we have as an organisation to ensure that our training and development and assessment processes/procedures are fair and support staff with different requirements, especially those with a disability or long-term health condition (e.g. diabetes) or cognitive/learning disability (e.g. dyslexia). The second workshop will focus on carrying out EIAs for key aspects of Training and Development Academy work to establish if there is any requirement to make changes to the way we deliver training, development or assessment at the Training and Development Academy.

Equality and Diversity Training

A review has taken place on the E learning modules we use to establish their currency and validity. The review has established that we require to modernise our Equality and Diversity training and education to best suit the needs of different levels of staff. This will help them to gain a greater insight into how they can consider and deliver Equality and Diversity in their daily roles. The need for a blended approach to training is essential. However this is difficult to balance with ever reducing resources which present real difficulties with removing staff from their operational roles for significant periods of time whilst maintaining our response standards. A project team will be developed during 2105/16 to progress this area of work.

Improving Communication

Following an office relocation and reorganisation, it became apparent to Cathy Scarth, watch manager in the data management team that a member of staff, Edward, was isolated in the office due to being deaf. There was already a procedure in place for meetings and training courses to ensure that there was always a British

Sign Language Interpreter, but conversations and communication in the office was limited.

It was decided to arrange a number of Deaf awareness courses for the department. The course which was delivered gave staff an insight into what it would be like to be deaf, and gave everyone a better understanding of the challenges a deaf person faces. It also included ways to communicate, with some basic sign language, and tips on what not to do, so that someone can lip read more effectively.

Since receiving the training the department has relocated to a larger office and the training has helped further as everyone feels more confident about their ability to talk to Edward. One member of the team has also completed a British Sign Language Course.

Alex Litwinski said: “The Deaf awareness session helped break down the communication barriers within the office and the fear of looking stupid when trying to communicate with our deaf colleagues. It pointed out some of the issues deaf people face on a daily basis in work. It also highlighted how isolated some deaf people may feel due to the fears of others regarding communication. The sessions were very informative and fun. Overall it was a brilliant session enjoyed by all.”

Edward Melvin said: “Before the training I felt people were scared to talk to me. Now it is much better.”

Excellent People

“To develop and value all our employees, respecting diversity, promoting opportunity and equality for all.”

Positive Action

Positive Action is a term which refers to a number of methods designed to counteract the effects of past discrimination in employment and to help abolish stereotyping. Employers are allowed by law to take Positive Action to help redress any imbalances that may have arisen as a result of past discrimination or disadvantage. The aim of Positive Action is to ensure people from previously excluded groups have the opportunity to compete on equal terms with other participants.

This year, our Positive Action Team has seen staff visiting events including Africa Oye, Liverpool Pride, Brouhaha and the Race for Life at Aintree, Sefton Park and Birkenhead to encourage people from a wider background to consider becoming a firefighter in the future. In addition to engaging with community groups and organisations from under-represented groups, including local colleges and universities. Practical support and advice is provided to assist people who wish to apply to join the Service as a Firefighter. It is all part of the Service's Positive Action approach.

Dementia Friends

This year has seen our district prevention team in Wirral and our firefighters in Sefton participate in Dementia Awareness training. The statistics below demonstrate the importance of understanding how dementia will affect our communities across Merseyside and the impact it may have on fire safety.

- By 2015 there will be 850,000 people with dementia in the UK.
- There will be 1 million people with dementia in the UK by 2025.
- There are 40,000 **younger people** with dementia in the UK.
- There are 25,000 people with dementia from **black and minority ethnic groups** in the UK.
- Two thirds of people with dementia are **women**.
- The proportion of people with dementia doubles for every five-year age group.
- One in six people **aged 80** and over have dementia.
- 60,000 **deaths** a year are directly attributable to dementia.

Across the Wirral, the District Prevention Team has been working with Age UK who have provided excellent training to MF&RS on becoming Dementia Friends and in return MF&RS staff have provided reciprocal training to help Age UK staff to identify vulnerable people at risk of fire.

The plan, is being led by Wirral South Constituency Manager Fergus Adams, to make Heswall a “dementia friendly community” in 2015, and MF&RS is a key partner in the initiative. Meetings have taken place with local community representatives, about the initiative, and how agencies and community members can get involved.

Wirral South Constituency Committee in partnership with the Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group have been working on a pilot to promote “Dementia Friendly Communities” in Wirral South since September 2014. Heswall was chosen as the pilot location and local partner agencies (including Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service) and the wider third sector were involved from the very beginning of the project. It was decided that increasing awareness and addressing stigma were the most pressing priorities for the project and to that end a number of ‘Dementia Friend’ sessions were held throughout March 2015. Over 100 new ‘Dementia Friends’ (including Merseyside Fire and Rescue staff) have been created so far and the project continues with a wider piece of commissioning to address Social Isolation in Wirral South having been agreed at the recent Wirral South Constituency Committee on June 18th. The aim of the project is to create a number of “Dementia Action Alliances” across Wirral south over the next two years.

Firefighters across Sefton have linked in with Home Instead to enhance their ability to deal with incidents involving people with dementia. Home Instead is an organisation that provides support for people with dementia to help them remain in their own home. The training they provided consisted of two training presentations delivered to all the watches at both stations, which included information about what dementia is, the causes of Alzheimer’s disease and other types of dementia and the symptoms and how to support people with these conditions.

Quote

Watch Manager Dave Shanahan, of Crosby Community Fire Station, said: “All members of the watches found the presentation to be informative and helpful in providing an insight into this terrible disease.

Operationally it will be helpful to quickly identify when we are dealing with people living on their own who are in the early stages of dementia, when either attending incidents or when carrying out Home Fire Safety Checks.”

Reaching out to our Communities

Crews at Southport Community Fire Station teamed up with paramedics from the station to make sure that 26 pensioners, who may have spent Christmas Day alone, enjoyed a Christmas dinner on Christmas day.

The crew organised the event and were assisted by local volunteers. The pensioners enjoyed a four course Christmas dinner, bingo, raffle, brass quartet, DJ and presents delivered by Santa, who arrived on a fire engine.

Transport provided by two mini buses, one from MF&RS and one from North West Ambulance Service NHS trust, ensured that everyone arrived and got home safely. One Firefighter, Brian Grimley, gave up most of his Christmas Day to volunteer with his family and drove the MF&RS minibus.

The event was organised by Watch Manger Ian Nelson and Brian Grimley (white watch) following a suggestion from one of the paramedics Sara Smith who is based at Southport Community Fire Station. With the help, donations and funding from over 50 businesses in the area they were able to organise a great day, and ensured everyone went home with a gift.

Southport Blue watch also distributed meals to homeless people in Southport following their Annual Christmas Dinner, earlier in the month rather than waste the large amount of food left.

Quote

Watch Manager Dave Shanahan, from Southport Blue Watch, said: "All too often too much food is cooked on Christmas day and a lot goes straight into the bin."

"Acting on suggestions from the firefighters on the watch it was great to see some of this food being shared with some of the homeless people in Southport."

Apprentices

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has developed an apprenticeship in Community Safety. This has enabled 12 young people to gain valuable experience in contributing to their community as well as gain a qualification.

The process to select the young people involved an open evening to inform them of the opportunity and the requirements for an Assessment Centre followed by an interview.

The young people are aged between 17 and 24, seven of which are male and five are female.

They have settled in well and are making a difference to their communities. They have also engaged in a residential course to assist their personal development and undertaken courses in key transferable skills such as presentations, report writing, problem solving and team working

In partnership with a local college we have also offered apprenticeships in catering and finance.

QUOTE TO BE ADDED FROM APPRENTICE – Afraseyab (Ali) Khan on his return from leave with WK 22/07/15



Think People, New Engagement Commitments

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service carried out a staff survey (Your Service, Your Voice) in the summer of 2014. 68% of staff responded. Since the publication of the results in October 2014, we have held 35 staff engagement meetings to discuss the results and to help identify possible solutions to the issues identified.

Those staff who attended the meetings represented many of the different staff groups across the organisation including different roles, levels and working patterns. The Strategic Management Group (SMG) members were also encouraged to meet with their teams to share the results of their survey for their own functions and with their managers to discuss any possible actions that may help to improve staff engagement.

The survey and focus groups and stakeholder meetings have helped MFRA to define some key principles that can explain what positive engagement looks like. These are expressed in the following seven statements, which we have now adopted as our Engagement Principles:

- **Staff feeling valued and recognised** – as individuals and for the job that they do.
- **Great Management and Leadership** – leaders at all levels being visible, open and accountable with two way communication channels from Principal Officers and managers through to staff.
- **Innovation and Transformation** – having mechanisms for all staff to share, learn, put into action good ideas and make a real contribution to the way our services are delivered.
- **Involvement in decision making** – ensuring staff are properly engaged and consulted on the future direction of the organisation and the way things are done.
- **Development and Training for all** – providing opportunities for teams to grow and learn and achieve high quality outcomes and satisfaction levels.
- **A healthy and safe work environment** – where staff can deliver high quality and services safely and operate to the best of their ability.
- **Being positive about Diversity and Equality** – valuing people, differences and respecting each other. Understanding that difference is healthy and enables us to deliver services to our diverse communities.

The Engagement Principles expressed above helped to introduce the concept of “**Think People**”; ensuring that considerations about people are at the heart of everything we do, are real and embedded in day-to-day management.

Work is now well underway to improving ways in which we engage with our staff and providing different approaches to valuing and recognising the contribution our staff make to deliver our core business aims. Our Think People: Engagement Commitments document is available from our website.²

N.B. A Separate report is available on our website which contains all the results from our 2014 Staff survey <http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/pages/Corporate/staffSurveyResults.aspx>

Key employment-related information – as at 31.3.15

- There are 1,102 staff employed at MFRA, as at the end of 2014/15 ,of which 68% are uniformed/operational³ and 32% are support staff
- 78% of staff are male and 22% are female
- Support staff have a 50% split between male and female
- Uniformed /operational staff have a gender split of 95% Male and 5% Female
- 48% of the total staff employed at MFRA are aged 46 and over
- 5% of staff have declared a disability (lower than the UK average population at 20%)
- 94% of the total staff population at MFRA are White British/White other , 3% of staff are Black Minority Ethnic (BME) –lower than the Merseyside average at 5.5%

More information on recruitment can be found on page 11, where we have provided diversity information on recruitment to support Equality Objective 5.

³ Includes Fire Control Staff

Part 2 – Equality and Diversity Standards and Events

Equality and Diversity Activity 2014/15– Standards and Awards.

Asian Fire Service Association – Positive Action Award

An approach by MF&RS to encourage people from diverse and under-represented backgrounds and wider backgrounds to consider a future job as a potential firefighter has received a national award.

In recognition of this work, the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) presented an award at their annual conference and awards ceremony to the MF&RS Positive Action Team.

AFSA works with Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) to mainstream subjects around equality and diversity in two priority areas:

- Service Provision and Delivery.
- Employment Policy and Practice.

The AFSA Vision is: 'The Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) will work with the National Fire and Rescue Services and supporting agencies to enhance equality and diversity and its associated values'.

Data Sharing

This year MF&RS have won three awards for our work to help to protect vulnerable people in the community through our data sharing with partners.

The first two were presented by the iNetwork for the recent project with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA). The Excellence in Information Sharing and Security Award (EISS) recognises the data-sharing work with the National Health Service to identify and highlight vulnerable people. The second award presented was the iNetwork Overall Best Innovation Award. The third was an award for the same project by the NHS.

These awards were received at the same time as a new publication was launched to encourage data sharing amongst agencies across Merseyside to help identify those who may be at a higher risk of a fire occurring in their home.

The publication is called "Dying for Data – Reducing Fire Deaths in Merseyside".

Matrix award for Youth Programmes – Equality and Diversity is commended

Matrix is an international quality standard for organisations that deliver information, advice and guidance (IAG) as part of their service offering. The Matrix is an outcome-based standard. This means MF&RS was assessed not only at processes used to support IAG delivery but also looking at results achieved.

The Matrix standard comprises of four elements – Leadership and Management, Resources, Service Delivery & Continuous Quality Improvement with each element containing assessment criteria, all of which must be met to achieve accreditation.

Primary evidence is collected through interviews with people who are directly involved in IAG delivery and those affected by it. One to one and / or group interviews are held with a sample of service delivery staff and their managers, clients and, where appropriate representatives of partner organisations, in MF&RS case The Prince's Trust, Hugh Baird and St Helen's College.

MF&RS was awarded Matrix accreditation for delivering excellent IAG in Fire Cadets (Schools Project), Beacon, LIFE and Prince's Trust. The Assessor highly commended the Youth teams' work on making Equality, Diversity and inclusion integral and embedded across all aspects of the youth programmes delivered at MFRA.

Fire Fit Schools International Olympic committee recognition

Our Fire Fit schools Programme which sees a member of MF&RS staff embedded into a local school, delivering physical education, adding strength to the existing provision within the school by increasing physical activity, improving wellbeing and acting as a point of contact to deliver other prevention messages.

A number of key performance outcomes have been identified for measuring the success associated with delivering Fire Fit Schools. These are:

- Increased physical activity.
- Increased attendance at school.
- Improved behaviour.
- Improved confidence and self-esteem.
- Instil a sense of achievement.
- Reduction in anti-social behaviour.

Around 340 schoolchildren from across Merseyside were put through their paces at the 2014 Fire Fit Active Challenge organised by our Service.

The World Cup Brazil-themed event saw pupils from 11 Merseyside schools

competing in a range of sports such as netball, rugby, football and volleyball at the Toxteth Fire Fit Hub.

Our Service staff delivered the event and Firefighters gave their support, along with young volunteers from Prince's Trust Toxteth Team 20.

All the children were given special yellow and green Fire Fit t-shirts, to fit in with the colours of the Brazil flag, and were awarded a Brazil- themed certificate at the end of the tournament.

As well as promoting sport, the event also encouraged healthy eating with a variety of nutritious food from across the world on offer for children to sample.

Through the wider stakeholder engagement, Fire Fit has successfully been listed as one of 40 programmes by the International Olympic Committee on its website as part of the ["Get Moving"](#) Initiative.

Equality and Diversity Events in 2014/15

Accessible Britain Challenge

MF&RS made a significant contribution to the Accessible Britain Challenge conference organised by Wirral Council at the Floral Pavilion, New Brighton. Group Manager Guy Keen, head of Protection for MF&RS delivered a presentation to over 300 guests on the importance of providing personal emergency evacuation plans to assist people with a disability in the event of an emergency.

The vision of the Accessible Britain Challenge is for communities to become more inclusive and accessible by engaging and working with disabled people to remove barriers that get in the way of them being full and active contributors in their community.

Liverpool Pride 2014 - Glam Fairy Tales

In 2014, as in previous years, staff and officers of MF&RS showed their support for LGBT issues, by participating in the 5th Liverpool Pride, which took place on Saturday 2nd August. The theme for the March was "Glam Fairy Tales".

Although the weather was not at its best, the event was very well supported. Staff and their families started the day with breakfast at our Liverpool City Community Fire Station, before joining the march through Liverpool city centre. The march ended at the Pier Head, where MF&RS had a stall to promote our Positive Action campaign and raise awareness of Hate Crime, staff were also joined by our pink fire appliance.

Ageing safely week 2014, (29th September to 5th October)

Because the risk of dying in a fire for those aged 65 and over is more than twice as high as the average risk for all ages, MF&RS identifies those who are most at risk and undertakes targeted prevention and protection activities.

Ageing Safely Week is an opportunity to highlight the important role of older people in our communities, and the FRS commitment to protecting them - particularly those who are vulnerable and may be most at risk.

A week of events were held across Merseyside as part of Ageing Safely Week, to help to keep elderly people safe from fire in their homes. As part of the week's events, over 70 staff from Service Headquarters from a variety of departments joined our District Prevention Team and firefighters in carrying out Home Fire Safety Checks and home visits to elderly people. The day coincided with the UK Older People's Day on 1st October.

Other events organised that week were visits to sheltered accommodation, attending community events aimed at older people and organised activities such as a Pilates Class for seniors at Toxteth Fire Fit hub by personal trainer Paula Muldoon.

The public were also encouraged to check on elderly relatives and neighbours to ensure that smoke alarms on each floor of their home were working.

Engaging with our Diverse Communities

Villages Housing organised a welcome event on the Stockbridge Village estate for their Polish residents following an increase of Polish families. Some of the Polish residents had been targets of anti-social behaviour, verbal threats and discrimination. Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service had received several referrals from Merseyside Police for properties on the estate requesting target hardening. A big concern was that the Polish families were not always reporting incidents; due to fear of the Police, language barriers, not knowing who to call or not having the correct contact details.

To provide targeted support, invitations were given to the Polish residents to a welcome event, where partners including Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service provided an overview of their services for Home Fire Safety Checks, anti-social behaviour concerns, hate crime and Safe Havens. An interpreter was used to deliver key messages, provide literature and help with specific information and advice.

The residents were all sent letters (in Polish) inviting them to the event, which Villages Housings then followed up with home visits.

The event was well attended with 15 families attending throughout the evening.

Villages Housing are planning a similar event later in the year in the hope to engage with more families and spread the word about the support and services they can access.

Faith Forum

MFRA has set up a multi-faith forum including support from the MFRA Chaplain, Merseyside Police Chaplain and the Diocese of Liverpool - Director for Church and Society. The purpose of the forum is to share contacts of key representatives for all major faiths across Merseyside to enable us to develop partnerships to assist faith communities in understanding fire safety. Further aims of the forum are to raise awareness of diversity events and provide support for our diversity calendar and to introduce our Positive Action programmes for recruitment to those under-represented groups. More work will continue around these partnerships during 2015/16.

Conclusion

I feel that MFRA has much to be proud of and I am confident that the Service will make further strides in this area of work in the future. I hope that you have enjoyed reading about what our staff have been doing to support Equality and Diversity and that you too have been inspired to get involved with us in the future whether that be as a member of staff, the community or a stakeholder .

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

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Email: wendykenyon@merseyfire.gov.uk

Telephone 0151 296 4000

Website: www.merseyfire.gov.uk

**Phil Garrigan,
Deputy Chief Fire Officer,
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.**

Case Studies

Letter from parent, who attended Hugh Baird Beacon “Pass Out” parade

I felt I must write after attending the passing out parade of Hugh Baird students on the Beacon Project last Friday.

The whole event was wonderful and the students were a credit to themselves and the college. I did not realize how much was involved and how much the students were able to achieve after only 12 weeks. Great credit must go to the Fire Service and all the support staff who made this project the great success it undoubtedly was. The students all seemed to thoroughly enjoy the whole experience. You could see the benefits the course offered the students in their firefighting and search and rescue displays. The teamwork, taking of responsibility and pride in their achievements was there for all to see, the attitude of the students and their discipline throughout the presentation was first class. I can honestly say that on a personal level, my daughter has never enjoyed such a worthwhile experience as the Beacon Project.

On a practical level she has also picked up first aid, basic firefighting and road and home safety skills. My daughter’s certificate takes pride of place in our house and she enthuses about the project to all her family and friends. I hope that the college continues to collaborate with the Fire Brigade to provide this very worthwhile project for future students.

Beacon Project Lights the Way

A new range of mini courses to help children in communities has started.

A “mini” Beacon Project course is being delivered in primary schools to help young people with their move to secondary school.

Suzy Tosi, who leads the delivery of the Beacon Project courses at Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, said: “The five-week, one day a week course is aimed at young people who are transitioning from primary school into secondary school. The aim of the course is to encourage young people to come out of their school environment and increase their confidence, teambuilding and communication skills.

“This new course sees us working with our partner agencies to support primary school children to help encourage the children to contribute positively to the communities where they live and to help strengthen communities.

“The Youth Engagement Team have recently delivered three Primary Beacon courses to schools in Sefton and Liverpool including Springwell Primary, St Elizabeth’s Primary and Monksdown Primary.”

Our Service also runs a separate Beacon Project course for teenagers. The course is for young people who are 13 to 19-years-old, who may be experiencing difficulties in engaging with school or with their peers.

The Beacon Project course for teenagers aims to improve young people's self-esteem and encourages self-development, which in turn aims to improve life chances for all young people. The Youth Engagement staff who facilitate all courses are a dedicated team of professionals who are seen as strong, positive and caring role models.

Courses are run at various Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Fire stations across Merseyside. Since 2002, more than 1,600 vulnerable young people have taken part in the youth courses

Prince's Trust - Elly's speech

Hi my name is Elly and I honestly can't believe I'm standing before you all here today. When we were asked to write this speech it really surprised me how long I spent thinking on how to start it. It is so hard to try and sum up the last twelve weeks and how much it has meant to me to be a part of the team programme. I turned 21 half way through team and it was an age I never thought I would reach. 12 weeks ago I couldn't imagine any sort of positive future for myself and I honestly feel like the team programme has enabled me to take control of my life again. During the last few years I have been hospitalised 8 times due to poor mental health and the last time I was in hospital for six months. I was then moved to a rehabilitation unit and I am still living there for the foreseeable future.

Mental health has been such a huge part of my life for so long and I want to support others like me, who are fighting for their life back. I have to fight my illness every single day and I hope when I am further along in my recovery, I can study mental health nursing and help others, better than I was. I am so proud of what I have achieved during team and for the first time in what feels like forever I am excited to move forward with my life and my recovery. The team programme is so unique and all of us on Team 27 have developed so much and we are all unrecognisable from the nervous reluctant group that walked through the door on that first Monday.

I believe that the residential was the turning point for my team and in Wales is where we started to develop the strong bonds we have today. Although most of us cried at some point over the 4 days away, it was an unforgettable experience and one that I wish I could do again. The memory that first comes to mind when I think of residential is the abseil. Standing at the top of that 120ft cliff in the rain, I seriously questioned my sanity. The Gorge Walk on the other hand, although challenging, was the highlight of residential for me. Despite being in a waterfall, whilst it was hailing, in Wales, during January, it was amazing and I really want to do it again. I feel it was during this particular challenge that I started to view us as a team and recognise that we needed to pull together to ensure everyone completed the challenge. We also played Hide and Seek whilst we were in Wales and that is memorable for different reasons. Our team leaders Sandy and Lacey had masks on to scare us and we

played the game in darkness. It was then one of our younger team members earned the unfortunate nickname 'Piddler'.

After residential we started planning for community project and decided together to renovate two rooms at the Dunnings Bridge Centre. It was so rewarding to give something back to our local community and it was an entirely new experience for me. I gained many valuable skills which includes painting and wallpapering, but also less obvious ones. For example I learnt the importance of planning, organisation and Health and Safety. I think it was during these few weeks that we first properly encountered S.M.A.R.T. (Which means Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Managed) I swear those letters will be forever engrained on all our brains.

This leads to weeks 7 and 8, and is when Team 27 would be separated for the first time in almost two months. And so began our work placements. I did my work placement within the Princes Trust, with Lacey and Michaela and I witnessed some of the hard and seemingly endless work that goes into the team programme, in order to make it run efficiently. I learnt to use my initiative, which will undoubtedly be useful in the future. I think this is when I began to notice the positive change in myself, as I was handling responsibility well and learning to communicate effectively. This was not just evident when I was in the team room, as I was communicating better within my personal life and as a result, I was getting positive feedback off friends and family.

I have always been a good listener and it was only now that my voice was starting to emerge, much to the dismay of my team members. Especially when I shouted at all of them during Army Day and I haven't shut up since.

I know however much I write in this speech, it will never fully convey my experience over the last twelve weeks. I am so proud and delighted that I am reading this today and I am sure that the people that have supported me in my personal life are proud also. I would like to take the opportunity now to thank Sandy, Lacey and Michaela.

You have all supported me and I can never thank you enough. My life was going nowhere before this programme and you encouraged me and taught me the skills I needed to believe in myself. That is one of the hardest things I've had to learn, and that is that I am capable of succeeding if I want it enough. That is not saying that everything is one hundred percent better, perhaps it never will be and I am slowly coming to terms with that. But this programme has succeeded where I and countless others have failed. It has encouraged me to move on and live again. So thank you Lacey, Sandy and Michaela.

I also owe a huge thanks to my team members. You have become like family and I am still refusing to accept that we will not spend every day together from now on. However you are all amazing people and I have faith that every single one of you will achieve anything you want to. Just remember to ask yourselves whether it is S.M.A.R.T. I love you all.

I want to thank my Key Worker as well. She has always believed in me and supported me, especially when I didn't believe in myself. So thank you Karen and the rest of the team at the unit.

A huge thank you as well to my family. I hope me standing here today makes you so proud and I love you with all my heart. The last three years will no doubt be the hardest years I will ever experience. But here is where it changes and my life begins again. I have been asked to return to the Princes Trust as a volunteer coach and I cannot wait. I promise I won't let anyone who has believed and supported me, down.

Thank you.

Prevention Activities- keeping diverse communities safe

Fire Safety Advice to family with Children with Autism

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Liverpool North prevention staff worked in collaboration with Occupational therapists to conduct a Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) with a family who have two children with severe autism. The HFSC established some safety measures to prevent children climbing and swinging from stairs and landing areas and provided fire safety advice.

Mobility

Additional support was given to help a disabled man in Liverpool who had had a below knee amputation. The support was established during a routine HFSC. Staff provided a high risk referral to Liverpool City Council's adaptations team to request wheel chair access in and out of the home (the home has steps front and back) and to re-size internal doors.

Workshop to raise awareness of Prevent

Prevention staff play an important role in working with vulnerable people across all communities. A workshop was arranged to provide staff with additional information around the Government's Prevent agenda and to support their role as safeguarding reporting officers. The training has enabled staff to understand what to look for in relation to extremism.

Asylum Seeker

A family was referred to the Liverpool North prevention for a HFSC. The family were feeling vulnerable through the way they were being taunted and threatened by neighbours. Target hardening devices were fitted during a HFSC and a 3rd party report was made to the SIGMA unit (Merseyside Police have 6 SIGMA teams with dedicated Hate Crime detectives) and a referral to the Hate Crime Joint Action group.

Recovery College

District prevention teams on the Wirral have been developing and delivering a home fire safety module for delivery at the recovery college who run courses for those recovering from mental health conditions. It's aimed at giving people information to help them to stay safe at home, as well as obtaining Home Fire Safety referrals.

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

FEEDBACK REPORT TO THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 JULY 2015

SUBJECT: MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY (MFRA)
ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS

REPORT NUMBER: [CFO/057/15](#)

APPENDICES: APPENDIX A: A RESPONSE TO THE MFRA
STAFF SURVEY: YOUR SERVICE
YOUR VOICE. REPORT NUMBER 1:
ENGAGEMENT COMMITMENTS –
THINK PEOPLE

REPORTING OFFICER: DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: DEB APPLETON

OFFICERS CONSULTED: WENDY KENYON
LYNN HUGHES
DEB APPLETON
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP

Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on the progress made in relation to staff engagement following the outcomes of the 2014 Staff Survey.
2. To introduce Members to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) Engagement Principles.

Introduction and Background

3. Following the results of the Staff Survey a number of meetings were held with staff, managers and Authority Members (Cllr Barbara Murray – Lead Member).

4. The results of the staff survey focus group and stakeholder meetings were presented and discussed. The meetings were convened in order to fully understand the outcomes of the survey and provide an opportunity for staff to contribute to the development of a set of Engagement Principles based on the concept of “Think People”.
5. These principles will be applied to all Staff Engagement now and in the future, with managers encouraged to engage staff at the earliest opportunity.
6. It was agreed that the MFRA Engagement Commitments would be drawn up based on the discussions, ideas and suggestions and be presented to the Strategic Management Group for consideration in April 2015. The subsequent Engagement Principles and Commitments are contained in Appendix A. The report also provides Members with a timeline outlining the key milestones for delivery over the coming months.
7. On 29th May 2015, the Commitments were launched on the MF&RA Portal page with the “Think People” branding and all staff received an email from the Chief Fire Officer informing them of the work which has been carried out so far.
8. Work on the implementation of the commitments is continuing and progress will be reported back to Members.

Equality and Diversity Implications

9. Developing and delivering Engagement Principles and Commitments to respond to issues arising from the staff survey will help to enhance the Service’s commitment to its staff allowing them to fully understand any issues related to Equality and Diversity.

Staff Implications

10. The development and delivery of Staff Engagement Principles and Commitments will impact positively on staff across the organisation. The introduction of the Think People principles are all focused around considering staff and implications for staff in relation to all decisions and strategies.
11. The ongoing commitment to the staff survey will impact on staff positively, as it is an opportunity for all staff across the organisation to provide their views and thoughts on the organisation.

Legal Implications

12. The procurement process was followed to engage the external supplier to deliver the staff survey and no further legal implications have been identified in relation to the Engagement Principles and Commitments contained in Appendix A.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

13. No specific financial costs have been identified, however officers will need to consider detailed costs for any additional work required to implement and support some of the Engagement Commitments.
14. Quotes have been sourced to support the implementation of the communication plan which underpins the Commitments and Principles, specifically designed posters and branding have been created for “Think people”.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

15. Knowing the workforce responses to the survey and what is causing them concern will enable the organisation to provide future support to enable an improved service delivery and will help to assure that any issues around health and safety are dealt with as part of the survey project.

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

16. This survey has benefited staff with opportunities for them to give feedback about all aspects of the Authority and Service. The development and delivery of Engagement Principles and Commitments will contribute to ongoing whole organisational developments.

Recommendation

17. That Members note and embrace the MFRA Engagement Principles as outlined in Appendix A and consider the next steps identified within the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

SMG Strategic Management Group

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**Your Service Your Voice;
A Response to the MFRA Staff Survey**

**Report Number 1:
Engagement Commitments-Think People**

Staff Version April 2015



Introduction

1. Following the Staff Survey: ***Your Service Your Voice*** results, released in October 2014, 35 focus engagement groups and stakeholder meetings took place from November 2014 to January 2015. A total of 134 (59 Uniformed, 44 Support) members of staff volunteered to attend and discuss their views and ideas on the key areas of concern from the Survey. Those staff who attended the meetings represented many of the different staff groups across the organisation including different roles, different levels and different working patterns.
2. Strategic Management Group (SMG) members were also encouraged to meet with their teams to share the results of their survey for their own functions and with their managers to discuss any possible actions that may help to improve staff engagement.
3. The focus groups were delivered using appreciative enquiry methods. A standard set of questions were developed to help manage the meetings, to encourage open feedback and to help staff provide solutions and ideas to fix the big problems the survey raised.
4. SMG met to discuss the outcomes from these meetings and this report provides the staff with the Engagement Commitments and Principles that arose from the meetings.

Positive Engagement for MFRA staff means

5. The MFRA staff survey and focus group discussions have helped to summarise what Engagement means to our staff, what matters to them and how they see Positive Engagement going forward, staff told us that :
- ✓ Employee engagement is a two way communication
 - ✓ Employee engagement is about open, honest, free flowing information
 - ✓ Engaged staff feel involved and contribute positively to all aspects of their working life
 - ✓ Engaged staff feel recognised, confident, worthwhile and valued
 - ✓ Engaged staff are interested and want to know what is going on in the organisation: they ask meaningful questions and provide opinions and solutions
 - ✓ Engaged staff are willing to put in extra effort without having to be asked to do so
 - ✓ Engaged staff show a willingness to be flexible
 - ✓ Engaged staff feel confident to offer suggestions and ideas
 - ✓ Engaged staff demonstrate positivity and focus on what's good about MFRA
 - ✓ Engaged staff want to do a good job and be the best they can be
 - ✓ Engaged staff feel enabled to influence the direction of the organisation on a day to day level; they feel they can get involved

Engagement Principles

6. The Survey and focus groups and stakeholder meetings have helped to define some key principles that can explain what Positive Engagement looks like. These are expressed in the following seven statements, which we have now adopted as our Engagement Principles:

- **Staff feeling valued and recognised** – as individuals and for the job that they do
- **Great Management and Leadership** – leaders at all levels being visible, open and accountable with two way communication channels from PO's and Managers through to staff.
- **Innovation and Transformation** – having mechanisms for all staff to share, learn, put into action good ideas and make a real contribution to the way are services are delivered.
- **Involvement in decision making** – ensuring staff are properly engaged and consulted on the future direction of the organisation and the way things are done.
- **Development and Training for all** – providing opportunities for teams to grow and learn and achieve high quality outcomes and satisfaction levels.
- **A healthy and safe work environment** – where staff can deliver high quality and services safely and operate to the best of their ability.
- **Being positive about Diversity and Equality** – valuing people, differences and respecting each other. Understanding that difference is healthy and enables us to deliver services to our diverse communities.

Think People.....

7. In its simplest form, employee engagement is about employees feeling that they belong to something they believe in, that they are valued for what they do and feel that what they do is of value.
8. Engaged employees are motivated and are able to give their best to help the organisation succeed. This process represents a cycle of benefit, where employee commitment delivers improved outcomes and services which assist the organisation in maintaining, demonstrating and improving its engagement with and commitment to staff
9. There is no one agreed definition of employee engagement – some say it's a more about attitude (e.g. staff want to do a good job): behaviours (staff putting in extra effort and care) or and outcome (innovation borne out of staff sharing suggestions and ideas). It is about the quality of working relationships at all levels across all departments and about the quality of relationship between employee and employer. Above all it's about **taking the time to think about people.**
10. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service will make the principles of good engagement work for our staff in the context of the staff survey outcomes. The Engagement Principles expressed in paragraph 6 introduce the concept of **“Think People”**; ensuring that considerations about people are at the heart of everything we do, are real and embedded in day to day management and business. The following sections explain how we will put “Think People” into practice.

MFRA Engagement Commitments

11. The following Engagement commitments are introduced as a result of listening to the views of staff expressed in the Your Service Your Voice, staff engagement survey and the recent staff engagement focus groups. These commitments are designed to help develop better engagement across all areas of the Service and will embed staff engagement in to our everyday business.

Commitment 1: We will conduct a staff survey every two years to engage with staff on matters that are important to them and to the organisation. The survey will monitor progress with our Engagement Commitments and Principles.

Commitment 2: We will continue to use staff forums and stakeholder meetings (including the four representative bodies) to focus on areas for change and development between the surveys and to gather feedback and views (e.g. Watch Manager forums and Female FF forum)

Commitment 3: We will increase the visibility and accessibility of the Authority Members, Principal Officers and Strategic Management Group through extending some existing practices and the introduction of new engagement activities that could include:

1. Breakfast with the Chief
2. Joint staff involvement days working on specific operational activities, shared experience days (e.g. Older persons day HFSC's)
3. Inviting operational staff into SHQ and vice versa to see how the service works; to gain a better understanding of the work that's goes on behind the scenes and share experience.
4. Involve staff in the development of organisational plans.
5. Learning Exchanges - getting to know teams and their role at MFRA –including Learning Lunches
6. SMG surgery days (open door policy to access SMG members to chat)
7. SMG meeting staff to discuss important matters, changes or deliver briefings across different themes with smaller groups – allowing information to flow back up to SMG and inform decision making.
8. Authority members will continue to visit all stations and teams across MFRA, holding Q and A sessions on specific themes or areas of priority and providing more information about their roles

Commitment 4: We will value and recognise staff for the good work they do through non-financial recognition and reward which managers will be empowered to use. This could include

1. Celebratory Awards - Team/idea of the month year
2. Improvement Scheme - re launch
3. Recognition from P.O's and the Chair of Authority for outstanding work
4. Other approaches to thanking staff, showing we appreciate them going the extra mile
5. Developing other non-financial rewards strategies that all managers can utilise to demonstrate their recognition and value of the work their teams do
6. Consolidate and re communicate what we already have as benefits to working for MFRS

Commitment 5: Staff engagement will be an important part of the SMG agenda at every meeting; considerations for all proposals, policies, decisions and actions will involve thinking about the impact it has on our people and the engagement required before decisions are made.

Commitment 6: We will enable and support all managers across the organisation to engage effectively and confidently with their staff on a regular basis and to feed into decision making processes at all levels.

Staff Engagement - Long Term Areas for Development

12. The Survey identified some complex cultural issues which are long term priorities for change, We are keen to explore these further as part of a series of separate dedicated SMG meetings:

1. **Build stronger management teams**, engaging with managers collectively to build a strong management teams at all levels to take ownership of their roles and responsibilities and importance of communicating positively with their teams on corporate messages/projects/themes.
2. **Improve communication** methods to reach all staff. We have complex structures and it is not easy to bring everyone together to receive a consistent message. So we will consider a number of communication approaches to reach all groups of staff.
3. **Improve working relationships** between different groups of staff and senior management to engender trust and transparency around areas including performance management and progression.
4. **Constructively challenge performance, attitudes and behaviours**, clearly and consistently at all levels, utilising the Conduct and Capability procedures.
5. **Develop a greater acceptance of change across the organisation, and improve how we manage change** - Change is going to be constant to meet the changing landscape of the FRS and the budget reductions. MFRA will look at ways to improve communication of change and how the organisation will manage people who won't engage with change?
6. **Agree what success will look like** – It is vital that SMG agree what success will look like at an early stage, to ensure the commitments achieve positive outcomes.

Next Steps

By End of May 2015

- Engagement portal to be developed to provide a central source of Information to keep Staff and Managers updated
- Engagement with the 4 Representative Bodies to communicate our commitments and discuss their ongoing support for the survey and its outcomes
- Launch the Principles and Commitments with staff by 31st May using a variety of communication methods (will continue on in to June and periodically throughout the project)

June 2015 onwards

- Implementation of the short term commitments 1 to 6 commences
- Evaluate progress with the Engagement Principles and Commitments, regularly communicating with staff (Hot News, posters, briefings and Portal)
- SMG to review and develop strategies on longer term and complex issues and communicate with Staff
- Report on progress to Authority at the meeting on 30th June 2015 and 6 monthly thereafter

2016

- Staff Survey Number 2 is delivered in the Spring

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

PERFORMANCE REPORT TO THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23RD JULY 2015

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE AGAINST NEW AFA PROTOCOL

REPORT NUMBER: [CFO/064/15](#)

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A:	UWFS DATA 2010 - 2015
APPENDIX B:	IMPACT ASSESSMENT
APPENDIX C:	EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
APPENDIX D:	DRAFT SERVICE INSTRUCTION 0039

REPORTING OFFICER: DCFO GARRIGAN

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: GM GUY KEEN

OFFICERS CONSULTED: SM CHRIS HEAD, WM DAVE MARTIN,

Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on the performance of the new Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Policy since its introduction in October 2012.

Introduction and Background

2. In the 12 months leading up to 1st November 2012 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) attended 5394 Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) (Appendix A.).
3. To reduce this burden and thereby enable MFRA to maintain appliance availability for operational response, operational training, prevention and protection activity and preparedness work, the Authority adopted a risk based response to UwFS.
4. Prior to implementation MFRA ran a comprehensive consultation and communication exercise. As a result of stakeholder feedback MFRA implemented the new protocol in 2 stages in order to allow responsible persons sufficient time to adjust their arrangements.
5. **Stage 1: 1st November 2012:** Appliances no longer attended non domestic premises on activation of an Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) system during daytime

hours unless a backup call had been received. Attendance to incidents at night time remained unchanged.

6. **Stage 2: 1st November 2013:** Stage 1 of the day time policy was extended to night time so that Appliances did not attend non domestic premises during night time unless a backup call was received. Sleeping risk premises such as hospitals, hotels and hostels were exempted from Stage 2.
7. The consultation and communication exercise was repeated prior to the implementation of Stage 2 and Protection officers continue to take opportunities to refresh stakeholders awareness of the current AFA protocol and the rationale that supports it, for example through a presentation by the Head of Protection at the NHS Estates and Advisory Group on 24th April 2015.
8. Performance at both stages of the Protocol was very positive (Appendix A.).
 - a. **Stage 1** Reduction of 50.43% to 2674 Incidents in the 12 month period up to 1st November 2013 compared to the same period in the previous year.
 - b. **Stage 2** Reduction of 21.05 % to 2111 Incidents in the 12 month period up to 1st November 2014 compared to the same period in the previous year.
9. Current performance has seen an expected marginal increase in UwFS from 1st November 2014 to 31st March 2015 of 7.35% compared to the same period the previous year. This was to be expected given the increase in Careline systems over the period and still represents a reduction of 60.1% compared to the same period before the Policy was introduced.
10. Protection officers have reviewed the dip in performance and can confirm that the marginal increase is a result of external factors (see paragraph 18) and are not as a result of any relaxation or complacency by MFRA.
11. Actions taken to date to resolve these increases are described later in this report.

National and Regional Influences

12. Our UwFS Protocol has received significant interest from Tyne and Wear, West Midlands and the Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Services, resulting in a number of visits to Merseyside.
13. Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), North West Region Protection Task Group recognises the unprecedented success of the MFRA protocol within the region and is actively exploring a common regional response to AFA actuations based on the Merseyside model.
14. The 2014 CFOA Guidance for the Reduction of False Alarms and UwFS's is the latest publication issued by CFOA to support the reduction of the significant number of UwFS across England and Wales.

15. The MFRA Protocol is generally consistent with the CFOA Guidance, in all but 3 areas:
 - c. Call filtering process
 - d. Investigation of an alarm during an emergency call
 - e. Providing Feedback to Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations (FAMOs)
16. An Impact Assessment Report detailing a full breakdown of the consistency of the revised MFRA protocol (SI 0039) against the new CFOA Guidance is provided at Appendix B.
17. Full compliance with the CFOA guidance would significantly compromise the effectiveness of the current AFA response protocol and would have a substantial negative effect on UwFS performance.

Performance Issues

18. As cheaper Fire Alarm Systems become available and the number of premises with AFA systems increases due to requirements to comply with current legislation and the increase in the use of Careline systems as local authorities' encourage more independent living, then the number of calls from these systems will also increase. Combined with older systems becoming less reliable the number of AFA calls received by MFRS and the number of UWFS we attend will also increase.
19. Analysis of top offenders since 1st November 2014 shows that the largest premises type is sheltered accommodation. Of the top 10 Offenders in this period 6 were Sheltered Accommodation accounting for 48% of UWFS.
20. Due to complex nature of underlying reasons for high level of AFA Actuations in top offender premises, progress has proved to be slow. Liverpool Protection Department are currently working with one of the top offender's; Concert Square 34 Wood Street Liverpool to reconfigure their alarm system to reduce UWFS.
21. District Protection Departments currently target repeat offenders and look to provide advice in reducing UWFS.

Improving Performance

22. It is proposed to standardise the process of targeting repeat offenders across Merseyside with a three step approach:
 - Step 1. Informal letter and meeting to discuss issues and suggest improvements. If no improvement is made move to:
 - Step 2. Audit of premises under Fire Safety Order, issue of Action Plan. If no improvement is made move to:
 - Step 3. Consider, where appropriate Enforcement Action under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

23. At a point in the future the Authority may wish to consider extending the current protocol of not responding to additional types of sleeping accommodation between the day time hours 07:30 – 19:30 (currently Hotels; Hospitals and Hostel's) to include Sheltered Housing Schemes where the Fire Safety Order 2005 applies and the Responsible Person has overall control of the premises and a legal responsibility to comply with the Order. This option has been reviewed by Protection Officers during the preparation of this report and consequently is not recommended at this point as fire safety risks clearly outweigh the perceived benefits.
24. Alternatively the Authority may choose to consider reviewing it's position to charging premises for attendance at UWFS under the Fire and Rescue services Act 2004 (FRSA) as amended by the Localism Act 2011. A review could consider the experience of other Fire and Rescue Authorities who have adopted a charging policy and the potential for such to positively influence repeat offenders of UwFS. Any review could also explore the evidence from those Authorities that have adopted a charging model, to consider whether aspects of the Authorities perceived rationale for not charging are borne out in experience. That is, the cost associated with setting up a charging system and the time taken to recover the debt would pose a financial risk to the Authority.

Equality and Diversity Implications

25. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is at Appendix C to this report.

Staff Implications

26. Targeting of repeat offenders through the use of Protection Officers does not create any staff implications as this would not extend beyond the normal expectations of their role.
27. Reducing time spent on attending UWFS releases operational personnel to complete risk critical training and Prevention / Protection roles

Legal Implications

28. After consideration of QC reports commissioned by other FRS in respect of AFA protocols, it can be confirmed that there are not likely to be any legal liabilities placed on MFRA as a consequence of the AFA Protocol (although there can be no absolute guarantee that a challenge will not be made – as everyone has a right to do so) provided that MFRA ensure a risk assessment and rationale behind its own decisions are published.
29. A detailed rational and risk assessment are detailed in Appendix D to this report.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

30. Research shows that from mobilisation to an appliance booking available again, takes on average 22 minutes per UwFS. Assuming four persons per appliance this equates to 1.4 'staff' hours of lost productivity per appliance per UwFS. From 1st November 2014 to 31st March 2015 MFRS have responded to 876 UwFS, 60 more incidents compared to the same period the previous year when the Service attended 816 incidents. These 60 incidents result in a total of $1.4\text{hrs} \times 60 = 84$ hours of lost productivity per Appliance.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

31. Service Instruction 0039 Risk Based Response to Automatic Fire Alarm Actuations including updated Risk Assessment is added as Appendix D.

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

32. Based on the risk assessment attached to this report at Appendix D, the existing protocol provides a better allocation of resources to protect against risks to the community and to firefighters than could be obtained if the Authority was to comply fully with the new CFOA guidance.
33. Targeting of repeat offenders through a formal process would look to achieve further reductions in UWFS and reduce the impact on business continuity through disruption caused by false alarms. This in turn would reduce risk to fire-fighters and the public by reducing the number of appliance movements on the roads of Merseyside and providing greater Appliance availability to emergency incidents.

Recommendation

34. That Members;
- a. Note the progress of the new AFA Policy in improving the Services performance in reducing Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS);
 - b. Note the rationale and approve the risk assessment that underpins the protocol;
 - c. Note the targeted approach to be adopted in relation to prolific offenders which it is envisaged will contribute to further improvements in performance.
 - d. Consider whether it would be appropriate to undertake a review, to explore the experience of other Fire and Rescue Authorities who have adopted a charging policy in respect of the potential for such to positively influence repeat offenders of UwFS and the financial impact to those Authorities.

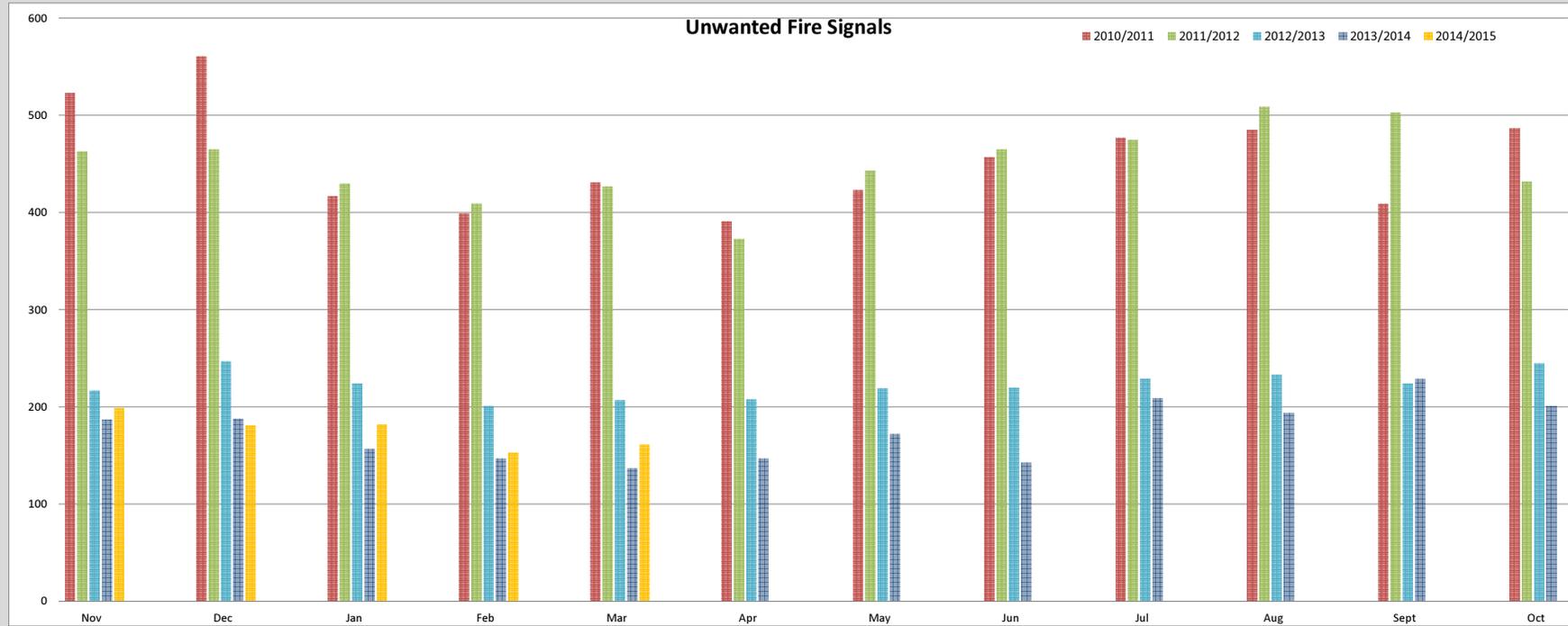
BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/015/12 Unwanted Fire Signals

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AFA	Automatic Fire Alarm
UWFS	Unwanted Fire Signal.
MFRA	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
MFRS	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
CFOA	Chief Fire Officers Association

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Total	Reduction
2010/2011	523	561	417	399	431	391	423	457	477	485	409	487	5460	
2011/2012	463	465	430	409	427	373	443	465	475	509	503	432	5394	-2.25%
2012/2013	217	247	224	201	207	208	219	220	229	233	224	245	2674	-50.43%
2013/2014	187	188	157	147	137	147	172	143	209	194	229	201	2111	-21.05%
2014/2015	199	181	182	153	161								876	7.35%



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IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT: Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority Response to the Chief Fire Officers Association Guidance for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document to highlight and rationalise inconsistency between the 2014 Chief Fire Officers Association (**CFOA**) **Guidance for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals** (UwFS)¹ and the Protocol adopted by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA). Where inconsistency cannot be rationalised this document will set actions to address the issue.

Objectives

- To identify and summarise the key aspects of the CFOA guidance;
- To identify where MFRA protocol is consistent with the key aspects of this guidance;
- To identify where MFRA protocol is not consistent with the guidance tool kit;
- To consider any legal risks to MFRA arising from inconsistency with the guidance;
- To identify the rationale behind aspects of the MFRA protocol that are not consistent with the guidance tool-kit; and
- To make recommendations on actions required to address risk concerns.

These objectives will be considered in relation to the Service Instruction SI 0039 “Risk Based Response to Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Actuations” which details the MFRA Protocol for responding to AFA actuations [Appendix A] and advice obtained from Queen’s Counsel and shared by other Fire and Rescue Authorities.

¹ For the purposes of brevity the ‘CFOA Guidance for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals’ will be referred to as ‘the 2014 CFOA Guidance’ within this report.

2. Background

The 2014 CFOA Guidance for the Reduction of False Alarms and UwFS's is the latest publication issued by CFOA to support the reduction of the significant number of UwFS across England and Wales. Industry and partners including representatives from Business and Alarm Receiving Centres have been involved in the development of this guidance.

Previous national publications on this issue include:

1. "A guide to reducing the number of false alarms from fire-detection and fire-alarm systems" published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2004.
2. "CFOA Protocol for the Reduction of False Alarms & Unwanted Fire Signals" 2010.

The main challenges that these publications sought to tackle include:

- Reducing the burden and cost of UwFS on the FRS;
- Reducing the burden and cost of UwFS on Businesses and Organisations;
- Providing (as far as reasonably practical) consistency in approach between FRA's across England and Wales.

The 2014 CFOA Guidance recognises that local priorities of individual FRS's will impact upon the ability of the FRS sector as a whole to deliver a consistent approach and therefore *"the guidance provides a "Tool Kit" approach for FRS to formulate their local strategies and policies and provides options for dealing with poor performance"*[p. 5].

3. 2014 Guidance Tool Kit

The Tool Kit has 6 stages [p. 10-13]:

- A. Highlighting the problem of UwFS and False Alarms from AFA Systems
- B. Prevention of false alarms
- C. Confirmation of the cause of alarm before calling the FRS
- D. Call handling by the FRS
- E. Investigation and follow up of false alarm calls
- F. Stakeholder Engagement

The following section will now identify the level of consistency between the MFRA protocol and the guidance detailed in the 6 stages above.

Level of Consistency

The following table identifies the level of consistency via means of a traffic light system where:

-  Consistent
-  Not consistent

A. Generic & specific campaigns to highlight the duties for and impact of UwFS	
B.1. Design, installation & commissioning of AFA systems in line with the relevant code of practice	
B.2. Providing advice and guidance on the maintenance & management of fire alarm systems	
C. (i). A fire alarm actuation should be investigated before the FRS is called	
C. (ii). Calls from high reliability systems (co-incidence detection & sprinklers) should receive an immediate response	
C. (iii). FAMO's should instigate a call back procedure.	
C. (iv). Care homes should be excluded from call filtering.	
D. (i). Call filtering process – mobilise PDA for fire to a confirmed fire.	
D.(ii). Call filtering process – mobilise PDA for AFA (reduced attendance) where cause of AFA is unknown.	
D. (iii). Call filtering process – non-response to a confirmed false alarm.	
D. (iv). FRS must not recommend the investigation of an alarm during an emergency call.	
E. (i). FRS consider providing feedback to FAMO's on the causes of alarm signals and the outcome of incidents.	
E. (ii). FRS to advise Responsible Persons on measures to prevent false alarms.	
F. FRS engage with key stakeholders to influence attitudes on AFA systems and repeat false alarms	

4. Liability Considerations²

Other Fire and Rescue Authorities have obtained Counsel's advice with reference to Fire and Rescue Service response to calls for assistance (2009) and CFA Guidance (2011) in relation to Automatic Fire Alarms and kindly shared this advice with MFRA.

This advice confirms that:

- Under the Fire and Rescue Services Act, 2004, there is no duty on a F&RA to answer a call for assistance nor take care to do so (court of appeals decision in *Capital and Counties PLC v Hampshire CC* (1997)).
- CFA Guidance and Protocols pertaining to this subject are not of statutory status. However it is advised that if this Guidance is not to be followed then there must be good reasons put forward as to why not. In addition a risk assessment should also be undertaken.

There are not likely to be legal liabilities to the way that MFRA approach this issues and its own Protocol (although this cannot be an absolute guarantee that no one will make a challenge – as everyone has a right to do) if MFRA ensure a risk assessment and reasons behind its own decisions are published.

² This section has been provided by Janet Henshaw, Solicitor to MFRA.

5. Comparison of MFRA Protocol and the CFA 2014 Guidance

Areas Not Consistent

The aim of this section is to highlight the areas of the 2014 CFA where the MFRA AFA Response Protocol is not compliant and then explain the justification for the non-compliance.

D.(ii). Call filtering

D.(ii). Call filtering process – mobilise PDA for AFA (reduced attendance) where cause of AFA is unknown. 

The MFRA protocol does not mobilise an attendance to an AFA where the cause is unknown. MFRA mobilise the full risk based attendance where there is a confirmed fire or signs of fire, however the 2014 CFA Guidance recommends that “*no emergency response... should only be applied if there is experience of persistent false alarms from specific premises*” [p14].

Justification:

Greater risk to the Community of Merseyside and to operational response personnel and resources (see risk assessment at section 6).

Where the responsible person has cause to believe that the MFRA AFA Response Protocol (of not mobilising an attendance to an AFA where the cause is unknown) may create a situation outside of the control of their fire risk assessment and hence put persons at risk from fire, then the responsible person is eligible to apply for an exemption from this aspect of the protocol.

D.(iv). Investigation of Alarm

D. (iv). FRS must not recommend the investigation of an alarm during an emergency call. 

The MFRA call-challenge protocol requires the caller to investigate the cause of the alarm and only to call back in the event that a fire or signs of fire are confirmed.

Justification:

To follow this guidance would undermine the effectiveness of the MFRA AFA Protocol which would have a direct impact upon performance and therefore increase risk to the Community and to operation response personnel. The investigation does not require the caller or any other person to put themselves at risk by entering any room affected by fire or products of fire, the MFRA protocol only requires them to confirm that there is a fire or signs of fire (see risk assessment at section 6).

The MFRA requirement for investigation is no different to the process detailed in the 2014 CFA Guidance: *'Dependent on the findings of a premises fire risk assessment, the fire safety arrangements in a building should include having a system in place to check the area where the alarm has been initiated. This will confirm at an early stage if there is a fire or the cause of the false alarm..... The arrangements should be included in the fire risk assessment, fire safety policy and emergency plan for the building and will be dependent on the building, its occupancy and use... If a call is placed via the services of a FAMO and no on-site filtering is employed, consideration should be made to establishing a call-back confirmation by the FAMO before alerting FRS'* (Page 11).

Where the responsible person has cause to believe that the MFRA AFA Response Protocol (of requiring an investigation to confirm a fire or signs of fire) may create a situation outside of the control of their fire risk assessment and hence put persons at risk from fire, then the responsible person is eligible to apply for an exemption from this aspect of the protocol.

E.(i). Feedback to FAMOs

E. (i). FRS consider providing feedback to FAMO's on the causes of alarm signals and the outcome of incidents. 

MFRA have attempted to engage with FAMO's however to date it has not proved possible to provide feedback to FAMO's.

Justification:

MFRA have made numerous attempts to engage with the FAMO's however they have failed to respond to our requests and invitations.

6. Risk Assessment

Risks, Mitigation and Control Measures

SIGNIFICANT RISKS	MITIGATING FACTORS	CONTROL MEASURES
<p>Delay in responding to a fire as a result of MFRA not responding to an AFA where at the time of the call no fire or signs of fire were confirmed.</p> <p>(i) Therefore increased risks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Persons affected by fire; > Fire crews due to fire growth. > Property > Business Continuity. 	<p>a. A review of previous incidents of fire in Merseyside over the 5 year period immediately prior to the current AFA Protocol confirmed that in the event of any significant fires at premises with AFA systems, the Service received numerous calls confirming a fire within the same time period as the actuation of the alarm;</p> <p>b. The greatest likelihood of a fire not being confirmed would be during night-time hours when less people are likely to be present in an alert state and therefore able to make an emergency call.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Automatic Exemption protocol 3. MFRA AFA Protocol Exceptional Exemption protocol 4. Risk critical training of Operational Personnel.
<p>Delay in responding to a fire as a result of MFRA operational response resources being committed to incidents that later prove to be UwFS.</p> <p>(ii) Therefore increased risks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Persons affected by fire; > Fire crews due to fire growth. > Property > Business Continuity. 	<p>a. Prior to the introduction of the new AFA Protocol in November 2012 MFRA were experiencing a growing trend in UwFS. During 2010, 1st January 2010 – 31 December 2010 there were 5801 UwFS (4064 to Non Residential premises, 1737 to Residential premises) therefore having 9,069 appliance mobilisations to false alarms at premises which had a ‘Responsible Person’. This has a direct affect upon the availability of nearest appliances to attend a real incident and therefore delays response times thus endangering lives of persons and property.</p> <p>b. Government financial reforms have resulted in MFRA reducing it’s operational fleet from 42 to 28 pumping appliances, further cuts in 2015-17 will result in a number of station closures and mergers which will decrease this further and by 2020 it is anticipated that MFRA will only have 20 fire appliances and 18 fire stations. This will significantly increase the likelihood and risk of appliance availability being lost due to attendance at UwFS</p> <p>c. Feedback from 2 periods of consultation, (May 2011 & Nov. 2011) conducted by Opinion Research Services “The forum unanimously rejected the policy of treating all AFA’s as emergencies. There was a general feeling that this pattern of response is wasteful and diverts emergency resources from more important incidents as well as fire prevention work and training”.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MFRA AFA Protocol call challenge procedure. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy. 3. Risk critical training of Operational Personnel.

<p>(iii) Road risk from emergency response mobilisations to responding fire crews and other road users</p>	<p>MF&RS attendance at 5801 UwFS is equivalent to: - 12,779 'blue light' mobilisations - 12,779 return journeys = 25,558 occasions other road users, pedestrians and fire crews are unnecessarily exposed to potential dangers in RTC's.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MFRA AFA Protocol call challenge procedure. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy
<p>(iv) Increased risk to residents in Merseyside due to reduced Prevention and Protection activities.</p>	<p>The average attendance to an UwFS = 2.23 Fire appliances (2/3 appliances per call); Average time taken to respond, manage and return = 22.34 minutes; From 5802 UwFS, the hours of productivity which can be better utilised for training, community safety activity etc. totals over 20,000 hours.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MFRA AFA Protocol call challenge procedure. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy
<p>(v) Risks to persons investigating the actuation of a fire alarm</p>	<p>The new AFA response protocol requires callers at non-exempted premises to investigate the actuation of their fire alarm and confirm the existence of a fire or signs of fire.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Responsible Persons are required to have in place a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment that covers all 'relevant persons', including employee's. This must include the management of their fire alarm system and therefore they are required to ensure that their personnel have sufficient supervision, information and training to ensure their safety from fire. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy 3. Training made available (at cost) for the safe investigation of AFA 4. Advice contained within section C of the 2014 CFA Guidance.
<p>(vi) Increased risk to operational fire crews due to reduction in risk critical training.</p>	<p>The average attendance to an UwFS = 2.23 Fire appliances (2/3 appliances per call); Average time taken to respond, manage and return = 22minutes 34seconds; From 5801 UwFS, the hours of productivity which can be better utilised for training, community safety activity etc. totals over 20,000 hours.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MFRA AFA Protocol call challenge procedure. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy

Risk Conclusion

In respect of a decision to respond or not to unconfirmed AFA's, either way the Authority has to accept risks to the community and to firefighters.

If MFRA continue to apply the current protocol of non-response to unconfirmed AFA actuations there are risks that could arise from delayed response in the event of a fire, albeit the experience in Merseyside demonstrates that only a small proportion (as low as 5%) of AFA actuations occur as a result of an actual fire and where this occurs the Service has quickly received back-up calls.

Alternatively, if MFRA reintroduce a response to unconfirmed AFA's there are still risks that could arise from delayed response in the event of a fire, however in these circumstances the risks would arise as a result of the Authority's shrinking operational response resources being unavailable to attend real emergencies due to being committed to response to AFA actuations. In addition to this risk would also be increased to both the Community of Merseyside and to Firefighters as the consequential resource drain from commitment to prevention, protection and safety critical operational training.

Therefore, when the risks are considered in aggregate, the response to unconfirmed AFA actuations (where a fire or signs of fire remain unconfirmed) significantly outweighs the risks from non-attendance.

Recommendations

The comparison of the MFRA AFA Response Protocol to the latest CFOA guidance (see sections 3 and 5) demonstrates that we remain compliant with all but 3 areas (D(ii), D(iv) and D(v)).

However, the justifications for compliance with D(ii), D(iv) and D(v) (see section 5) demonstrate that compliance would significantly compromise the effectiveness of the current AFA response protocol and based upon the evidence, would have a substantial negative effect on UwFS performance.

Therefore as a consequence of the risk conclusion and the justifications for variance from the CFOA guidance, this report recommends that **MFRA should continue to pursue the current AFA protocol including the aspects of the protocol that are not consistent with the 2014 CFOA Guidance.**

As part of the control measures MFRA should continue to review this protocol and the risk assessment on an annual basis.

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Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
Equality Impact Assessment Form

Title of policy:	Unwanted Fire Signal Reduction Policy
Department:	Community Fire Protection
Date:	06.05.2015
<p>1: What is the aim or purpose of the policy</p> <p><i>This should identify “the legitimate aim” of the policy (there may be more than one)</i></p>	
<p>To further reduce the number of Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) received and responded to by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service by advice to premises and Formal Action under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 To ensure the most vulnerable people within our community are not disadvantaged by the further development of this strategy</p>	
<p>2: Who will be affected by the policy?</p> <p><i>This should identify the persons/organisations who may need to be consulted about the policy or procedure and its outcomes (There may be more than one)</i></p>	
<p>Strategic Management Group Fire Authority Business Community Regional UwFS Group</p>	
<p>3. Monitoring</p> <p><i>Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this policy. This could include data which shows whether the policy is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.</i></p>	
<p>What monitoring data have you considered? Data compiled from incidents recorded on Vision Boss are collated to provide UWFS Performance figures</p>	<p>What did it show? Stage 1 UWFS Protocol Reduction of 50.43% to 2674 Incidents in the 12 month period up to 1st November 2013 compared to the same period in the previous year Stage 2 Reduction of 21.05 % to 2111 Incidents in the 12 month</p>

	<p>period up to 1st November 2014 compared to the same period in the previous year.</p> <p>Current performance has seen a marginal increase in UWFS from 1st November 2014 to 31st March 2015 of 7.35% compared to the same period the previous year. This is a very modest increase and still a reduction of 60.1% compared to the same period before the protocol was introduced.</p>
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<p>4: Research</p> <p><i>Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy. This could include quantitative data and qualitative information; anything you have obtained from other sources e.g. CFOA/CLG guidance, other FRSs, etc</i></p>	
<p>What research have you considered?</p> <p>2014 Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) Guidance for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS)</p>	<p>What did it show?</p> <p>. MFRA Protocol is generally consistent with the CFOA Guidance in all but 3 areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • . Call filtering process • Investigation of an alarm during an emergency call • Providing Feedback to Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations (FAMOs)
<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) Outline any plans to inform consultees of the results of the consultation</i></p>	
<p>What Consultation have you undertaken?</p> <p>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service hosted 2 Consultation events in September 2013 to consult with Stakeholders and Alarm Receiving Centres as to implementation of Stage 2 of the protocol</p>	<p>What did it say?</p> <p>In summary, affected organisations recognised the reality faced by MFRs and its need to reduce UWFs, concern was raised over sleeping risk at night time and the short time scale afforded to implementation of Stage 2.</p>

6. Conclusions

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

(a) Age

Proposed action is against the Responsible Person for premises, even where the premises is involved in the care or accommodation of particular age groups, children's homes or sheltered accommodation for example, this should not have a disproportionate impact. Formal action is aimed at ensuring that premises are safer from the risk of fire and comply with legislation; this would be a positive impact

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

Persons with disability will not face any negative impact, as in (a) Formal action is aimed at ensuring that premises are safer from the risk of fire and comply with legislation; this would be a positive impact

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

No perceived negative or positive impact, Protection Department is in the process of collecting Equality and Diversity Data to assess whether Fire Safety activity is affecting any protected groups disproportionately.

(d) Religion or Belief

No perceived negative or positive impact, Protection Department is in the process of collecting Equality and Diversity Data to assess whether Fire Safety activity is affecting any protected groups disproportionately

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

No perceived negative or positive impact, Protection Department is in the process of collecting Equality and Diversity Data to assess whether Fire Safety activity is affecting any protected groups disproportionately

(f) Sexual Orientation

No perceived negative or positive impact, Protection Department is in the process of collecting Equality and Diversity Data to assess whether Fire Safety activity is affecting any protected groups disproportionately.

(g) Socio-economic disadvantage

It is possible that less economically successful and premises run on a non profit making basis (hospices for example) may face costs in improving their automatic

fire alarm systems and fire procedures.

7. Decisions

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

Community Fire Protection will act consistently and proportionally in accordance with the Regulators Code to see that any protected group are supported and assisted as much as possible .

Fire Safety activity is aimed at supporting premises to operate safely and reduce the risk of fire. Advice given to premises will approach reduction of UWFS in this way, only considering enforcement action when other approaches have not been successful.

8. Equality Improvement Plan

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

Action Planned	Responsibility of	Completed by

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 should be emailed to the Diversity Team at the above address for inclusion on the Diversity Action Group Agenda



Service Instruction 0039
Risk Based Response to Automatic Fire Alarm Actuations

Document Control

Description and Purpose

This document is intended to give guidance to all personnel on the Services response to Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) and Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS).

Active date	Review date	Author	Editor	Publisher
		SM Chris Head	GM Guy Keen	
Permanent	x	Temporary	If temporary, review date must be 3 months or less.	

Amendment History

Version	Date	Reasons for Change	Amended by
1.1	10.07.10	Changes to procedure	SMD 2960 Taylor
2.0	28.09.12	Edited and amended by AM Myles Platt (pre-consultation)	WM Martin
	14.11.12	Feedback from draft consultation	GM Keen
2.1	22.11.12	Error correction in Appendix A	GM Keen
2.2	30.04.13	Amends to procedure for fire crews to Educate & Inform	GM Keen
2.3	26.02.15	Annual Review / Issue of revised national guidance	GM Keen

Risk Assessment (if applicable)

Date Completed	Review Date	Assessed by	Document location	Verified by(H&S)
November 2010	30.04.2013	SM Longshaw		

Equalities Impact Assessment

Initial	Full	Date	Reviewed by	Document location
	xxx	10/01/2012	Ustar Miah	

Civil Contingencies Impact Assessment (if applicable)

Date	Assessed by	Document location

Related Documents

Doc. Type	Ref. No.	Title	Document location

Contact

Department	Email	Telephone ext.
Community Fire Protection		

Target audience

All MFS	Ops Crews	Fire safety	Community FS
X	Senior officers	Non uniformed	

Relevant legislation (if any)

Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Definition

When an Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) actuates for any reason other than a fire condition, this is referred to as a false alarm. The point at which the Fire and Rescue Service is requested and responds to a false alarm, is referred to as an Unwanted Fire Signal (UwFS).

Introduction

UwFS have an adverse impact on the economy and business continuity due to disruption caused in the public and private sectors, the effect on the commercial sector alone in lost time, business disruption and productivity is estimated, nationally, to be in excess of £1 billion each year.

Historically, MF&RS have responded to all AFA actuations with the full risk assessed Pre-Determined Attendance (PDA) to the premises. Emergency response to UwFS adds to the disruption by delaying the investigation process and therefore increasing the time to confirming any false alarm and then repopulating the premises.

There is no legal responsibility on MF&RS to respond to calls originating from an AFA system to establish if there is a fire. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Fire Safety Order) states that the '*Responsible Person*'¹ at the premises is legally responsible and must have in place a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) that details, amongst other measures, what actions are to be taken upon actuation of the AFA system. It is not sufficient that the FRA relies upon the FRS to investigate the reason for the actuation of the AFA system but the FRA should include action to notify the FRS via the 999 system as soon as a fire, or physical signs of fire, are confirmed.

Despite the best endeavours of the Service, the percentage of AFA actuations which are confirmed as UwFS had continued to rise under the previous protocol (pre-November 2012). This trend is unsustainable given the increasing financial challenges and consequential risks placed upon MF&RS, its stakeholders and the community of Merseyside.

Risk Based Approach

In respect of a decision to respond or not to unconfirmed AFA's, either way the Authority has to accept risks to the community and to firefighters.

Non-response to unconfirmed AFA actuations presents some risks that could arise from delayed response in the event that a fire has occurred, albeit the experience in Merseyside demonstrates that only a small proportion (as low as 5%) of AFA actuations occur as a result of an actual fire and where this occurs the Service has quickly received back-up calls.

Alternatively, if MF&RS reintroduce a response to unconfirmed AFA's there are still risks that could arise from delayed response in the event of a fire, however in these circumstances the risks would arise as a result of the Authority's shrinking operational response resources being unavailable to attend real emergencies due to being committed to response to AFA actuations. This risk would also be increased to both the Community of Merseyside and to Firefighters as the consequential drain from prevention, protection and safety critical operational training.

Therefore, when the risks are considered in aggregate, the response to unconfirmed AFA actuations (where a fire or signs of fire remain unconfirmed) significantly outweighs the risks from non-attendance.

A full risk assessment complete with mitigation and control measures is detailed at [Appendix C](#).

¹ The 'Responsible Person' is defined position within the Fire Safety Order

Protocol:

- MF&RS will no longer provide an emergency response to fire calls generated by AFA systems unless a call is received via the 999 system, confirming a fire, or physical signs of fire, at the premises in question. This protocol will apply 24 hours a day unless an exemption is granted.
- Premises with AFA systems configured to 'double-knock' principles as defined in the MF&RS definition of double knock alarm systems (see [Appendix A](#)) will receive a full emergency response on activation of the second 'knock'.

Exemptions

Automatic Exemptions

- **All single private domestic dwellings and all dwellings where the responsibility for the safety of the occupier rests with the individuals who reside there, will automatically BE EXEMPTED from this policy.**
- **Sleeping risk premises are automatically exempt between night time hours from 19:30 to 07:30.**
- All premises that have a reliable AFA system meeting the MF&RS definition of 'double knock' (see [Appendix A](#)). Where a 'double knock' system develops a trend of UwFS the automatic exemption status of the concerned premises may be reviewed and in the absence of a satisfactory resolution, may be revoked.

Exceptional Exemptions

This protocol allows a further exemption process for premises that do not fit the automatic exemptions criteria: Any Responsible Person that deems that their premises have exceptional circumstances, due to a fire risk assessment which relies on MF&RS responding to investigate fire alarm actuations in order to ensure the safety of occupants, may apply for an exceptional exemption. The aim of an exceptional exemption is to allow Responsible Persons a reasonable window of opportunity to address the failings in their fire risk assessment.

Each case is considered on its own merits and must meet the following conditions:

- The onus is on the Responsible Person to submit their case to MF&RS.
- The case must be based upon high risk to persons resulting from the new MF&RS UwFS protocol.
- Exemptions will not be granted where MF&RS believe that the Responsible Person can take reasonable action to mitigate the risk.
- Exemptions will only be a temporary measure, they will be reviewed within 12 months and MF&RS expect the Responsible Person to work towards achieving a permanent satisfactory solution, e.g. upgrading alarm systems to a 'double knock' system, employing staff to manage the risk etc.

Procedure

In order to reduce the burden of UwFS on all organisations MF&RS will adopt a risk based approach to the response to and the management of all AFA actuations. This approach will include a robust Call Challenge procedure by Mobilising and Communications Centre (MACC) personnel, Call Back protocols by Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations and no response to certain actuations – unless a fire or physical signs of fire are confirmed.

Call Challenge

Call challenging involves a MACC operator questioning any caller to determine whether an emergency response is required following the actuation of an AFA. Where the caller has no reasonable grounds to believe that there is a fire, or physical signs of fire, at the premises (i.e. the call is made prior to any investigation) then the caller will be informed that no emergency response will be mobilised until an investigation is completed, and they should call back immediately upon any confirmation of fire, or physical signs of fire.

As a result of call challenge MACC will mobilise appliances as an emergency response to a confirmation of fire, or physical signs of fire.

In the event that a fire, or physical signs of fire, cannot be confirmed then there will be no emergency response.

Procedure for Call Handling (MACC) 07.30-19.30 hours.

Upon receipt of a call the MACC operator will determine the call source and property type.

Calls from Exempted Premises

For all calls received, regardless of call source, involving any premises that have been formally exempted under this protocol, MACC will mobilise the full emergency **response** PDA.

All Other Premises

All other premises will be call challenged whether the call is direct from the premises or via a Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisation.

If a fire, or physical signs of fire, is confirmed then MACC will mobilise the full emergency **response** as determined by the PDA.

If a fire, or physical signs of fire, is **not** confirmed the caller will be told:

“MF&RS will not make an emergency response at this time. Please investigate and if you confirm a fire, or physical signs of fire, then please call back immediately on the 999 system”.

‘Double Knock’ Actuations (Red Bar on Vision BOSS)

All premises that have an Automatic Fire Alarm system meeting the MF&RS definition of ‘double knock’ (see [Appendix A](#)) will receive a full emergency response upon actuation of the ‘second knock’, this will be indicated on the Red Bar system. This will only apply when the call is received from a Fire Alarm

Monitoring Organisation (FAMO). If the call is received from the premises directly then normal call challenge procedures and responses apply.

Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations (FAMO)

On receipt of a call from a FAMO, with the exception of 'second knock' actuations identified on the red bar system (see 'Double Knock criteria above), MACC will request confirmation that the caller has instigated their 'Call Back' protocol prior to forwarding the alarm call to MF&RS (as recommended in the 'Best practice for summoning a Fire Response via Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations'²). If the FAMO has not utilised this facility they will be asked to do so and informed that 'MF&RS will not make an emergency response at this time. If you re-contact the premises and confirm a fire situation please contact the Service again and we will respond'.

If the FAMO has attempted 'call back' but failed to re-contact the premises they will be told 'MF&RS will not make an emergency response at this time'.

If the FAMO has used 'call back' and confirms a fire exists or there are physical signs of fire, a full emergency response will be mobilised.

If a fire or physical signs of a fire cannot be confirmed, then only one appliance will be mobilised to the address, at normal road speed, to assist the Responsible Person by offering advice and guidance.

Monitoring and Review

All AFA calls to MF&RS will be monitored by Community Fire Protection officers and in the event that premises continue to generate UwFS, MF&RS will assist those premises by working with the Responsible Person, offering advice on how to manage and maintain their AFA systems. This does not prejudice MF&RS fulfilling its responsibility as an Enforcing Authority under the Fire Safety Order. The impact of the new protocol will be continually monitored and reviewed during and beyond the implementation phase.

Guidance for Fire Crews attending premises with AFA Systems

Where Fire Crews attend premises with AFA systems in the course of their duties, it is important that any advice given is consistent with current procedures and protocols and that the level of advice given is appropriate to the level of expertise of the firefighter / fire officer providing the advice.

Further guidance for Fire Crews on giving such advice is given at [Appendix B](#).

² Chief Fire Officers Association Code of Practice

Summary of Mobilisations

Alarm received to an exempted premises	24 hours	Full Emergency Response
Confirmed fire or physical signs of fire at any premises	24 hours	Full Emergency Response
Alarm Activation – No confirmation of fire or physical signs of fire	24 hours	No response - Caller asked to call back following an investigation that confirms a fire or physical signs of fire
Alarm Activation at a premises with a sleeping risk – No confirmation of fire or physical signs of fire	19.30 - 07.30 hours	Full Emergency response
Alarm Activation at a premises with a sleeping risk – No confirmation of fire or physical signs of fire	07.30 - 19.30 hours	No response - Caller asked to call back following an investigation that confirms a fire or physical signs of fire
Alarm Activation – No FAMO 'call back' procedure	24 hours	No response. FAMO asked to instigate 'call back' procedure
Alarm Activation – FAMO cannot re-contact Premises	24 hours	No response

Appendix A: MF&RS Definition of Double Knock Alarm System

Double Knock System Definition

There are many varied interpretations for 'Double Knock' systems across the fire safety industry, for the purposes of exemption under the new protocol for responding to AFAs, MF&RS will only recognise 'Double Knock' systems that it have been inspected by a Fire Protection Officer and confirmed as meeting the criterion in this document.

MF&RS considers a 'double-knock' fire alarm system as one where a signal is not sent to the fire service from the AFA until there have been two notifications received by the system, for example:

- One detector activating sounds a local alarm only; followed by,
- A second device (for example a detector / fixed installation / call point) activating which then routes a fire signal through to the Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisation (FAMO) or generates an immediate 999 call.

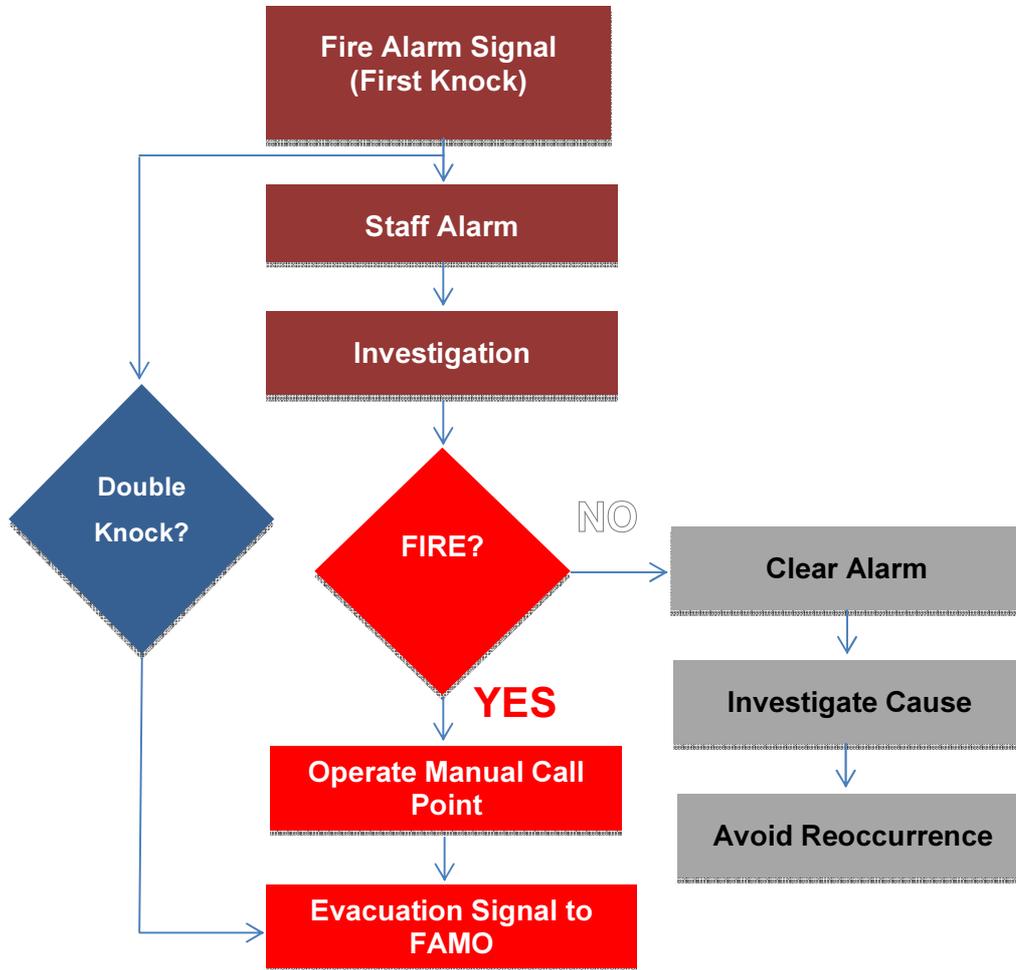
In setting these criteria MFRS make reference to the following sections of BS 5839 pt 1:

Where speed of response is important in an environment in which false alarms might result from the type of fire detection that is desirable, multi-sensor fire detectors or a system incorporating coincidence detection can enable early detection of fire without an unacceptable rate of false alarms.

In some systems there may be significant potential for reduction of false alarms by the use of coincidence detection.

A form of filtering involves the use of a staff alarm arrangement (see 5839 Clause 19). This permits an investigation period following activation of an automatic fire detector, prior to operation of fire alarm sounders. Staff alarms that incorporate such an investigation period are now quite common in large, complex and well-managed buildings that are protected by a high number of smoke detectors. The staff alarm arrangement may apply at all times or only at certain times of the day, such as normal working hours; in this case, the system is also a time-related system.

Double Knock System Flow Chart



Appendix B: Guidance for Fire Crews

The purpose of this appendix is to provide MF&RS fire crews with guidance on the advice and further guidance that they give to occupiers when attending a fire alarm actuation that results in an UwFS.

It is not intended as document for members of the public therefore must not be handed out to occupiers.

This guidance should be printed off, encapsulated and stowed on an appliance to assist fire crews.

Key Points:

- MF&RS fire crews will:
 - **NOT** provide technical fire protection advice;
 - **ONLY** provide advice and guidance that falls within their operational area of expertise;
 - Direct technical queries to the **MF&RS website** (the home page has a direct link to the UwFS page) and / or **Fire Service Direct 0800 731 5958**;
 - **NOT** direct technical queries to the Protection Department offices or officers;
 - **MUST** request the attendance of an Article 31 officer where the risks within the premises are so serious that the use of the premises ought to be restricted or prohibited.

Examples of Advice and Guidance

DO NOT advise on:

- Any matters relating to the Occupiers fire risk assessment;
- Any matters relating to altering the construction or use of the building;
- Any technical matters relating to any fire protection systems, (e.g. alarms, fire suppression, emergency lighting, etc).

DO advise:

- That the occupier is responsible for managing the fire risk within the premises and that failure to do so may put them in breach of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order);
- That until a fire or physical signs of fire is confirmed then it is the Occupiers responsibility to investigate the actuation of their fire alarm system;
- That as soon as a fire or physical signs of fire are confirmed by any person, then the investigation ceases immediately and a fire call must be passed via the '999' emergency telephone system;
- On examples of physical signs of fire (e.g. signs of heat &/or smoke);

- How to safely investigate the actuation of a fire alarm;
- On how to prevent false alarm actuations, e.g. Regular maintenance by a competent fire alarm engineer, control; housekeeping to prevent fumes from cooking, aerosol sprays, steam from affecting detector heads (not to include any advice on altering the alarm system).

In the Event of Serious Fire Safety Concerns

Where an OiC considers the fire risk to persons in the premises is **so serious it is may cause a threat to life**, then MACC must be informed and an Article 31 Officer requested. The Fire Crew must remain in attendance and await the Article 31 Officer.

There are four main areas of failure that may cause such a risk:

- Means of escape;
- Means of giving warning;
- Fire loading / Combustibles / Ignition Sources ;
- Risk to a 'relevant persons' (persons legally entitled to use the building).

Where the implications are **less serious**, then the OIC must email a completed UwFS **Exception Report (Form FSO SL019)** to Protection Policy Support mailbox. This form is available on the MF&RS portal under the Protection Dept. Shared Documents/Library/UwFS. Hard copies should be kept on the appliance for completion at the premises.

Appendix C: Risk Assessment

Risks, Mitigation and Control Measures

SIGNIFICANT RISKS	MITIGATING FACTORS	CONTROL MEASURES
<p>Delay in responding to a fire as a result of MFRA not responding to an AFA where at the time of the call no fire or signs of fire were confirmed.</p> <p>(i) Therefore increased risks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Persons affected by fire; > Fire crews due to fire growth. > Property > Business Continuity. 	<p>a. A review of previous incidents of fire in Merseyside over the 5 year period immediately prior to the current AFA Protocol confirmed that in the event of any significant fires at premises with AFA systems, the Service received numerous calls confirming a fire within the same time period as the actuation of the alarm;</p> <p>b. The greatest likelihood of a fire not being confirmed would be during night-time hours when less people are likely to be present in an alert state and therefore able to make an emergency call.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Automatic Exemption protocol 3. MFRA AFA Protocol Exceptional Exemption protocol 4. Risk critical training of Operational Personnel.
<p>Delay in responding to a fire as a result of MFRA operational response resources being committed to incidents that later prove to be UwFS.</p> <p>(ii) Therefore increased risks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Persons affected by fire; > Fire crews due to fire growth. > Property > Business Continuity. 	<p>a. Prior to the introduction of the new AFA Protocol in November 2012 MFRA were experiencing a growing trend in UwFS. During 2010, 1st January – 31 December 2010, there were 5801 UwFS (4064 to Non Residential premises, 1737 to Residential premises) therefore having 9069 appliance mobilisations to false alarms at premises which had a 'Responsible Person'. This has a direct affect upon the availability of nearest appliances to attend a real incident and therefore delays response times thus endangering lives of persons and property.</p> <p>b. Government financial reforms have resulted in MFRA reducing it's operational fleet from 42 to 28 pumping appliances, further cuts in 2015-17 will result in a number of station closures and mergers which will decrease this further and by 2020 it is anticipated that MFRA will only have 20 fire appliances and 18 fire stations. This will significantly increase the likelihood and risk of appliance availability being lost due to attendance at UwFS</p> <p>c. Feedback from 2 periods of consultation, (May 2011 & Nov. 2011) conducted by Opinion Research Services "The forum unanimously rejected the policy of treating all AFA's as emergencies. There was a general feeling that this pattern of response is wasteful and diverts emergency resources from more important incidents as well as fire prevention work and training".</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MFRA AFA Protocol call challenge procedure. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy. 3. Risk critical training of Operational Personnel.
<p>Road risk from emergency response mobilisations to responding fire crews and other road users</p> <p>(iii)</p>	<p>MF&RS attendance at 5801 UwFS is equivalent to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12779 'blue light' mobilisations - 12779 return journeys <p>= 25558 occasions other road users, pedestrians and fire crews are unnecessarily exposed to potential dangers in RTC's.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MFRA AFA Protocol call challenge procedure. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy

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(iv) Increased risk to residents in Merseyside due to reduced Prevention and Protection activities.	The average attendance to an UwFS = 2.23 Fire appliances (2/3 appliances per call); Average time taken to respond, manage and return = 22.34 minutes; From 5801 UwFS, the hours of productivity which can be better utilised for training, community safety activity etc. totals over 20,000 hours .	1. MFRA AFA Protocol call challenge procedure. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy
(v) Risks to persons investigating the actuation of a fire alarm	The new AFA response protocol requires callers at non-exempted premises to investigate the actuation of their fire alarm and confirm the existence of a fire or signs of fire.	1. Responsible Persons are required to have in place a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment that covers all 'relevant persons', including employee's. This must include the management of their fire alarm system and therefore they are required to ensure that their personnel have sufficient supervision, information and training to ensure their safety from fire. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy 3. Training made available (at cost) for the safe investigation of AFA actuations made available by MFRA 4. Advice contained within section C of the 2014 CFOA Guidance.
(vi) Increased risk to operational fire crews due to reduction in risk critical training.	The average attendance to an UwFS = 2.23 Fire appliances (2/3 appliances per call); Average time taken to respond, manage and return = 22 minutes 34 seconds; From 5801 UwFS, the hours of productivity which can be better utilised for training, community safety activity etc. totals over 20,000 hours .	1. MFRA AFA Protocol call challenge procedure. 2. MFRA AFA Protocol Communication Strategy