

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE		
DATE:	22 MARCH 2018	REPORT NO:	CFO/018/18
PRESENTING OFFICER	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	PHIL GARRIGAN	REPORT AUTHOR:	DEB APPLETON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	DAVE MOTTRAM, MIKE CUMMINS, JACKIE SUTTON		
TITLE OF REPORT:	IRMP 2017 UPDATE - CONSULTATION REPORT		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	IRMP 2017/20 UPDATE REPORT PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESPONSE
	APPENDIX B:	CONSULTATION RESPONSE
	APPENDIX C:	FBU RESPONSE
	APPENDIX D:	LANCASHIRE FRS RESPONSE
	APPENDIX E:	GREATER MANCHESTER FRS RESPONSE
	APPENDIX F:	FOA RESPONSE

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the outcomes from the public consultation undertaken in relation to the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2017/20 Update Report.

Recommendation

2. That Members note the responses to consultation on the IRMP 2017/10 Update Report and consider any implications.

Introduction and Background

3. In 2017 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) introduced its 2017/2020 Integrated Risk Management Plan. The key objectives from the IRMP were contained within the Service Delivery Plan and are incorporated into Functional Plan objectives were applicable.
4. The National Framework (currently under review) requires each Fire and Rescue Authority to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan adhering to the following criteria:

Each fire and rescue authority integrated risk management plan must:

- be easily accessible and publicly available
- reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies, and partners

- cover at least a three year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that fire and rescue authorities are able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework
 - reflect up to date risk analyses and the evaluation of service delivery outcomes
5. The 2017/20 IRMP was reviewed in late 2017 to determine progress to date and whether there are any significant changes or new actions that need to be considered (see Appendix A). It is not intended to produce a new IRMP in 2018/19 as the existing IRMP is still current. It is however intended to include an IRMP update in the Service Delivery Plan (the subject of a separate report on this agenda). MFRA approved a consultation period of two months on the website to inform stakeholders about progress and invite comment to help inform the planning process. This was also the subject of social media posts. In addition, consultation took place with the Representative Bodies and links were sent to Local Authorities and Fire and Rescue Services.

Consultation responses and MFRS comments

6. The online survey received 43 responses (Appendix A) and written responses were received from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) (Appendix C), Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (Appendix D), Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (Appendix E) and the Fire Officers' Association (FOA) (Appendix F). Unite and Unison representatives provided supportive verbal feedback at consultation meetings.
7. Respondents to the online survey were asked to answer four yes/no questions (see Table 1 below) and an additional free text question "*Are there any areas where you would think that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service could do more in the future, or do things differently to help us achieve our Mission of "Safer, stronger communities; Safe, effective firefighters?"*" The Representative Bodies were asked to consider the update report and this was then the subject of discussion in meetings.
8. The number of people who responded to the online survey is small and the outcomes cannot be taken as statistically significant, but the respondents do provide us with valuable insight into what some people think about the Service and in several cases they repeat some common misconceptions which mean that their responses should be treated with caution. That said, it is incumbent on MFRA to communicate information on how it delivers its services in a way that can be easily understood and this will be considered in future communications about planning and service delivery.
9. As can be seen from Table 1 the majority of respondents were supportive of MFRA's approach in relation to it providing value for money and the majority also said they would be prepared to pay more council tax to protect the Service from further cuts. An equal number of respondents agreed and disagreed that MFRA had made sufficient progress during 2017 and a small majority felt that the work carried out during 2017 would not have had a positive impact on

vulnerable people. A majority felt that the Service should not respond to cardiac arrest victims.

Table 1: Online survey responses.

	Do you think that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority has made sufficient progress during 2017 against the proposals we set out in the IRMP 2017/20?	Do you think that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority is using its resources effectively to meet the demands placed on the service	Do you think that the work Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority has done during 2017 will have a positive impact on more vulnerable people? For example the elderly	Do you think that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service provides value for money?	Would you be prepared to pay more in Council Tax to protect the fire and rescue service from further cuts?	Do you think that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority should respond to cardiac arrest victims in support of (not as a replacement for) North West Ambulance Service
Yes	11	13	14	17	31	13
No	11	19	16	15	7	24
Don't Know	21	11	12	11	5	6
Total	43	43	42	43	43	43

10. It is important to read the comments associated with these views to get a more comprehensive picture of the way in which people decided how to respond on these matters. The comments can be read in full in Appendix B, but they fall into a number of broad themes which have been considered by officers. Those broad themes and the officers' responses are set out in Table 2 below for Member scrutiny.

Table 2: Consultation response themes.

Theme	MFRS Response
<p>Objection to the previously agreed IRMP objective to move to day crewing with wholtime retained (on call) at night on a number of stations; particularly Wallasey and Liverpool City (proposed) and Crosby (delivered)</p> <p>Wallasey was specifically mentioned in 11 responses; with some people thinking that the change would result in a 30 minute delay to emergency response, some thinking that the station was due to close and another person thinking that the station would be staffed at night, but not during the day.</p>	<p>The move to days and retained on six stations is a fundamental part of the 2017/20 IRMP that was extensively consulted on during 2016/17. This type of duty system has regularly been the subject of consultation over a number of years and has been accepted by stakeholders as a suitable alternative to station closure that will assist MFRA make the savings it is required to make to deal with budget cuts.</p> <p>The misconception that people would be subject to a 30 minute delay to an emergency during the night time retained period has previously been raised in the media. This is not the case, as an emergency response will always be sent</p>

<p>Formby should not have an immediate response at night when the more urban area of Crosby does not.</p> <p>The closure of West Kirby fire station had an impact on two fire deaths in Wirral.</p> <p>Crewing systems result in poor time management on stations.</p>	<p>from the nearest on duty fire station and the on call firefighters will only be recalled to a fire station if the number of available fire appliances drops below a prearranged number. They will never be mobilised directly from home to an emergency incident. The 10 minute response standard can still be met from surrounding stations.</p> <p>Concerns that more incidents occur during the night also reflect a misunderstanding, as the evidence show that this is not the case, hence why MFRA has considered the move to Days and Retained to be the least detrimental option by which to manage the cuts (accepting that there are no options to improve service when implementing cuts).</p> <p>Formby is a Key Station due to its geographical location. It is staffed using the Low Level of Activity and Risk crewing system due to the relatively low number of incidents, but it is essential that an immediate response can be maintained from Formby to meet MFRA's 10 minute response standard. Crosby's location means that other stations including Bootle/Netherton can meet the 10 minute response standard into Crosby's station area at night. No other station can do this in Formby's station area.</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that the two fire deaths in Wirral resulted from the closure of the fire station. Response standards were maintained and any changes to crewing are thoroughly assessed prior to implementation to ensure that acceptable levels of response can be maintained.</p> <p>The previous 7 hour rest period allocated to firefighters during a fifteen hour night shift was reduced to a 4 hours rest period when the night shift length was reduced to twelve hours. This effectively moved three hours of unproductive time into productive shift activity such as training and community work, but crewing systems are regularly reviewed (and new options considered) to enable MFRA to deliver the best service it can with limited resources.</p>
<p>North West Ambulance Service</p>	<p>It appears that the respondents opposing</p>

<p>(NWAS) has (or should have) the resources and training to respond to cardiac arrest victims and fire fighters should not be supporting them in responding to such incidents, particularly if this is to the detriment of FRS work. Firefighters should be offered counselling in relation to this area of work.</p>	<p>this did not realise that Firefighters would only respond to such incidents alongside NWAS to provide support and would not replace an ambulance.</p> <p>Research evidence has shown that with additional support given to a paramedic, the likelihood of someone surviving a cardiac arrest increases, and when MFRA trialled this approach in 2017 Firefighters successfully assisted paramedics in the return of spontaneous circulation in 33 patients.</p> <p>These life-saving services were not delivered to the detriment of fire and rescue related emergency response, which will always be the priority for MFRA, but made use of time that was available to provide a valuable service to the community.</p> <p>Additionally, MFRA believes it has one of the best occupational health service provisions of any Fire and Rescue Service in the country, with extensive support available to all staff. We are particularly proud of the award winning support we provide our staff in relation to their mental health.</p>
<p>MFRA does not carry out as many Home Fire Safety Checks as it used to, smoke alarms are no longer free and mentally ill and elderly people need more support.</p>	<p>It is true that MFRA does not carry out as many HFSCs as it used to. This is due to cuts resulting in a reduction in front line firefighters and support staff who carry out these activities, but they are more targeted at high risk people than was previously the case, and as a result more effective in preventing fires. Fires and deaths in the home have reduced in recent years.</p> <p>The majority of HFSCs are delivered to the over 65s, as they are at greatest risk of being injured or dying in a fire. People with medical and physical health conditions are also targeted where partner organisations share information about them. This concentrates our significantly reduced resources on those most at risk.</p> <p>All these HFSCs still include free smoke alarms if required, but they are not promoted as widely as they were because the service cannot be offered free to everyone.</p>

	<p>The Service is also piloting a Safe and Well visit which provides additional health related prevention services to at-risk people.</p>
<p>There should be no more cuts, money should be put back into the Service, the Service is underfunded and being downgraded, council tax should be increased and managers are paid too much.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, MFRA has no control over the grant that is provided to it by the Government. Previous lobbying by Principal Officers and MFRA members was successful in relation to MFRA receiving cuts that were equal to those of other Fire and Rescue Services rather than being significantly worse. Lobbying still continues, but there is no indication that the Government will increase the amount of funding it gives to the Fire and Rescue Service.</p> <p>Fire and Rescue Authorities have been permitted to increase the council tax precept for 2018/19 by an additional 1% and MFRA has taken this opportunity to reduce the amount of savings it needs to make. However, this increase is not sufficient to offset most of the savings required.</p> <p>As with any organisation, salaries vary according to the levels of responsibility attached to the role. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service is no different to other organisations in this respect.</p>

11. The written responses received from the FBU and FOA have also been considered by officers and responses are provided in Table 3 below. It is important to state that all the Representative Bodies understood that MFRA has difficult decisions to make in the face of serious financial constraints, but not all representative bodies agreed with the objectives within the IRMP. Again, a themed approach has been taken to addressing this feedback. The full written response from the FBU can be found at Appendices C and F.

Table 3: Representative Body Responses

Theme	MFRS Response
FBU:	
<p>The FBU reject the concept of cost being the main driver for change.</p>	<p>Although considerable consideration was given to the key risks on Merseyside and how those could be addressed when preparing the IRMP, unfortunately it is the case that resources are limited and the services</p>

	that can be delivered need to be considered in relation to both risk and cost.
Reductions in deaths and injuries are more to do with luck than prevention or intervention.	<p>Independent research by Liverpool John Moores University supports the view that delivering HFSCs to over 65s in Merseyside has had a positive impact on fires, deaths and injuries.</p> <p>Emergency response levels remain good, with the attendance standard being met on over 90% of occasions and an average response time to life risk incidents of 5 minutes 41 seconds.</p>
The implementation of days and retained crewing is a “step too far”	See responses in Table 2 above.
FBU members in Merseyside work over and above their contractually agreed hours for less than nationally agreed pay rates.	This arrangement is part of a local agreement and is popular with some staff who are able to increase their wages by providing additional voluntary hours paid at the national hourly rate rather than at enhanced rates.
<p>Objection to the following in the introductory section of the IRMP update as they believe it gives the impression that Firefighters would not respond to terrorist attacks:</p> <p><i>“The Fire Brigades Union nationally have instructed their members not to take part in certain activities that were being widely piloted and rolled out across the fire and rescue service. This includes work in relation to emergency medical response and terrorist attacks.”</i></p>	The section refers to work in relation to emergency medical response and terrorist attacks rather than saying that the FBU instructed their members not to respond to terrorist attacks. This relates to the national marauding terrorist firearms attack (MTFA) work stream, but the more generic language was chosen to avoid being overly technical.
Operational response information regarding the number of fire appliances in Merseyside is incorrect.	<p>The original IRMP proposal stated 18 immediately available fire engines between 2030-0830hrs. This was before the decision to move an additional pump to Kirkdale. This makes 19 pumps immediately available.</p> <p>2200-0830hrs – 4 appliances on reduced turn out (LLAR). We do not consider LLAR to be delayed turnout as they must make a 1.9 minute alert to mobile response which is the same as WT crews.</p> <p>2030-0830hrs - 6 not 8 fire appliances are available on a 30 minute delay – It</p>

	clearly states in the IRMP update that 2 additional recruit development pumps will be available for the duration of the IRMP.
Contractual changes with regards to new recruits are in contravention of national conditions of service.	New Day Crewing Wholetime Retained contracts have been introduced to give contractual enablement to the decision of MFRA to adopt Emergency Medical Response (EMR) and uplift its Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA) capability. Legal advice confirms the contracts are lawful and do not contravene the Grey Book national terms and conditions for firefighters.
The continued use of resilience contracts is a major concern, having cost £1 million to date.	The Government requires MFRA to have in place arrangements to maintain emergency services in the event of industrial action. MFRA considered the options and risks and decided that ensuring in advance that fully trained professional resources would be available through the implementation of resilience contracts was preferable to waiting until industrial action was imminent and relying on goodwill, or paying for the provision of services by private companies employing less well trained staff.
The FBU regrets MFRA's decision not to reduce its numbers.	Given the current review of fire and rescue service governance by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, the Fire and Rescue Authority decided that making any significant changes to governance before the outcomes of the review are known would not be in the best interests of the Fire and Rescue Service.
FOA:	
Although broadly supportive of the IRMP, FOA raised some matters not directly covered in the IRMP that they would like considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Incident Command Unit primary crewed with suitably command trained managers • DIM/Hazmat support offered by operational crews in support of DIM Officers • Although supportive of safe and 	A review of command support is ongoing. The Service is actively working towards delivering DIM/Hazmat support to the DIM Team through operational crews. Safe and well visits are currently being delivered through Advocacy Teams. In the event that this is extended to operational crews then the Service will ensure that they are well equipped to support the initiative

well visits FOA would need to ensure staff are equipped to support this initiative.	
---	--

12. The responses received from Lancashire and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services are supportive of MFRA's plans and can be read in full at appendices D and E.

Implications

13. Although raising valid comments in some cases, following careful consideration it is not considered that any changes are required to the 2017/20 IRMP as a result of this consultation. The reasons why no changes are required are set out in the tables above. However, further consideration of the way MRFA communicates information about change to its stakeholders, particularly the public, is appropriate and this this will be reviewed in the future.

Equality and Diversity Implications

14. The Equality Impact Assessment was updated when the IRMP was published in 2017. It is not considered that any of the matters raised would alter the EIA.

Staff Implications

15. Staff Representative Bodies were consulted during the consultation and individual staff were able to complete the online survey. Consideration of any implications for staff are set out in the tables above.

Legal Implications

16. MFRA publishes an IRMP reviews the IRMP as part of the requirements of the National Framework, itself a requirement of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

17. There were no costs associated with the consultation. Any costs resulting from the objectives within the IRMP will be the subject of separate reports to MFRA.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

18. The IRMP details MFRA's assessment of risk, setting objectives for the medium term.

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

19. The IRMP is the main document in which MFRA sets out the way in which it aims to manage risk in Merseyside.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/111/11 If this report follows on from another, list the previous report(s)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority

MFRS Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service