

## MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>3<sup>RD</sup> JULY 2019</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/038/19</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>DEB APPLETON</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>DEB APPLETON</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>IRMP SUPPLEMENT 2019/21 POST-CONSULTATION REPORT</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX 1:</b>	<b>DRAFT IRMP SUPPLEMENT 2019-21</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 2:</b>	<b>ORS CONSULTATION FORUM REPORT</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 3:</b>	<b>ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 4:</b>	<b>RESPONSE FROM FOA</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 5:</b>	<b>RESPONSE FROM UNISON</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 6:</b>	<b>RESPONSE FROM CFO OF CUMBRIA FRS</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 7:</b>	<b>RESPONSE FROM OFFICER IN STAFFORDSHIRE FRS</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 8:</b>	<b>EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 9:</b>	<b>RESPONSE FROM THE FBU</b>

### Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members consider the outcomes of public consultation on the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) supplement 2019/21 and to seek approval for the publication of the final post-consultation version.

### Recommendation

2. That Members;
  - a. Consider whether the responses to consultation have been adequately considered by officers and are reflected within the IRMP supplement 2019/21 (Appendix 1), where appropriate.
  - b. Note that there are areas of the IRMP supplement that will have direct impact upon staff. In line with all staffing matters the IRMP supplement has been the subject of additional staff consultation/negotiation.
  - c. Note that the proposals within this IRMP supplement have been subject to

extensive public consultation. The outcomes of these consultations have been attached as appendices to this report.

- d. Approve the IRMP supplement for 2019/21 and its implementation - which will provide increased resources to the communities of Merseyside for the first time in many years.
- e. Approve the IRMP supplement 2019/21 for publication in a designed format.

## **Introduction and Background**

3. It is a statutory requirement of the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2018 to produce an IRMP. This IRMP has been written to ensure compliance with the National Framework.
4. Merseyside FRA's IRMP is a medium term plan that evaluates progress made as a result of previous IRMPs and captures future aspirations and the strategic direction for the Authority in order to deliver its Mission: Safer, Stronger Communities; Safe Effective Firefighters.
5. Members will be aware that the published IRMP 2017/20 is still current and this supplement, if agreed, will enhance rather than replace it in its entirety. Where plans in the supplement replace those in the original IRMP, this is clearly stated.
6. The IRMP and supplement deal in a strategic way with the implications of risk, demand and vulnerability in Merseyside, in the context of the resources available to the Authority.
7. Subject to approval of the IRMP supplement 2019/21, the Chief Fire Officer will exercise his delegated responsibility in the management of any changes resulting from it.
8. Future reports to the Authority will contain the detail on any such changes resulting from the IRMP supplement.

## Consultation

9. Since the draft IRMP supplement was approved at the Budget Authority meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019 a twelve week consultation process has taken place (14<sup>th</sup> March to 6<sup>th</sup> June) and the outcomes from this are summarised below and reported within Appendices 2 to 8.
10. The consultation process included the following:
  - a) Publication of the draft IRMP supplement 2019-21 on the Merseyfire website
  - b) Publicity regarding the launch of the consultation process was published on the Authority website, Portal, Facebook and Twitter pages
  - c) Five public consultation forums (99 people attended)

- d) Distribution of the IRMP to over 100 strategic partners and other interested parties
- e) Meetings with staff Representative Bodies – Fire Brigades Union, Fire Officers Association, UNISON and UNITE
- f) Principal Officer talks with staff
- g) An on line questionnaire on our website for the public and staff (81 responses)

Public Forum

- 11. Opinion Research Services (ORS) an independent research company were commissioned to facilitate five District-based forums at Birkenhead, Bootle and Netherton, Belle Vale, Kirkdale and Newton le Willows community fire stations, to consider the Authority’s draft IRMP supplement. ORS’s role was to recruit and facilitate the meeting and report outcomes. ORS worked with MFRA to prepare supporting material for the meeting, providing the fullest possible information for participants.
- 12. MFRA has had an extensive programme of engagement with residents for a number of years and, in this context, ORS has regularly facilitated district-based and all-Merseyside forums. Within this on-going framework, MFRA has conducted ‘listening and engagement’ and ‘formal consultation’ meetings.
- 13. The consultation forums followed on from the public engagement carried out in 2016 that assisted MFRA in the development of the 2017/20 IRMP. This included revisiting the Authority’s Planning Principles which were endorsed by the public in 2016 and were used in planning the IRMP supplement. The full ORS consultation forum report can be found at Appendix 2.
- 14. Consultation forums of this type are used because they enable the Authority to engage with a meaningful way with a cross section of representative members of Merseyside communities as demonstrated below:

CRITERIA	ST HELENS	SEFTON	LIVERPOOL	WIRRAL	KNOWSLEY	OVERALL
Gender	Male: 13 Female: 8	Male: 9 Female: 10	Male: 14 Female: 7	Male: 9 Female: 12	Male: 10 Female: 7	Male: 55 Female: 44
Age	16-34: 4 35-54: 7 55+: 10	16-34: 6 35-54: 4 55+: 9	16-34: 6 35-54: 6 55+: 9	16-34: 4 35-54: 5 55+: 12	16-34: 2 35-54: 8 55+: 7	16-34: 22 35-54: 30 55+: 47
Ethnicity	0 Non-White British	0 Non-White British	2 Non-White British	0 Non-White British	1 Non-White British	3 Non-White British
Limiting Long-term Illness	4 LLTI	2 LLTI	2 LLTI	3 LLTI	3 LLTI	14 LLTI

- 15. The consultation forums were **highly supportive** of the IRMP supplement proposals and the following outcomes resulted from the events;

- MFRA's Planning Principles were supported
- There was unanimous support for the new 'Protection', 'Resilience' and 'Response' proposals.
- MFRA's planning assumptions were supported.
- The alternative plan was accepted by all – and all other new IRMP proposals were supported.
- MFRA should consider extending its provision of free smoke alarms to the most deprived areas of Merseyside, but must also carefully consider the method by which it does so. This does not form part of the IRMP supplement proposals but was included in the forums as early engagement in relation to preparation for the 2021-24 IRMP.
- MFRA offers excellent value for money, but future council tax rises should be carefully considered.
- There are no negative equality and diversity impacts, as the proposals are positive for all.

#### On-line Questionnaire

16. An on-line questionnaire was available on the MFRS website. The full results report including comments is attached at Appendix 3. The questionnaire asked respondents for their views on the alternative and new proposals. The vast majority of respondents supported the proposals with several including comments and suggestions that will be considered further when the plans are implemented, should the supplement be approved by the Authority. The summary of results is as follows:

- **97.4% of respondents (74 from 76 valid responses) preferred the alternative 2019/21 IRMP supplement proposals over the original 2017/20 IRMP proposals.**
- 92.3% of respondents (72 from 78 valid responses) agreed with the proposal concerning the exploration of opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness of response.
- 89.7% of respondents (70 from 78 valid responses) agreed with the proposal concerning the feasibility of drone technology utilised on a retained basis.
- 98.7% of respondents (77 from 78 valid responses) agreed with the proposal for the organisation to explore the use of modern technologies to better inform the mobilisation and dispatch of fire appliances and specialist vehicles.
- 100% of respondents agreed that enhancing data held about properties over the border from Merseyside is a proposal well worth implementing

- 98.8% of respondents (79 from 80 valid responses) agreed that enhancing cross border training with neighbouring fire and rescue services, should be pursued.
- 95.1% of respondents (77 from 81 valid responses) agreed with increasing the staff within the Protection team and introducing the role of Fire Engineer to the non-uniformed establishment

### Staff Representative Bodies

17. Consultation meetings took place with representative bodies.
18. FOA's response (Appendix 4) was supportive of the proposals and they concluded by saying:

*"We are eager to work with the Service constructively to bring these proposals forward for the benefit of the community and of our members."*

19. UNISON's response (Appendix 5) was supportive of the proposals, only expressing concern that any future plans to move or merge stations should not result in longer response times. They commented that:

*"The use of reserves to pay off debt thereby freeing up revenue budget to achieve these proposals is welcomed by UNISON."*

20. Two other points made about ancillary services and pay awards for non-uniformed staff are not related to the IRMP Supplement and have been passed to the People and Organisational Development Department for consideration.

Officers met with the FBU as part of the consultation process but no formal response was provided by the 12 week consultation deadline. We have subsequently received an update on the FBU position by email , which is attached at Appendix 9.

21. UNITE were supportive of the proposals during the consultation meeting but have chosen not to provide a written response.

### Consultation with Partners

22. The IRMP Supplement and details of the on-line survey were sent to Chief Fire Officers, MPs, libraries, One Stop Shops, Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner and North West Ambulance Service. It is not possible to establish exactly who has responded to the survey as a result of this part of the consultation (as the responses are anonymous), but two specific written responses were received.
23. Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service Chief Fire Officer commented in his response (Appendix 6):

*“It is pleasing to note your progress against the objectives set out in your IRMP and I am confident that the delivery of your alternative proposals will have the desired effect in improving the safety of the people of Merseyside whilst delivering an effective and efficient fire and rescue service.”*

24. An officer from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service emailed (Appendix 7), having reviewed the proposals and suggested some changes to the structure of the IRMP supplement which have been made in the revised version.

He also added – *“A well-presented and easy to understand narrative”*.

25. Although there have been minor changes made to the IRMP as a result of the consultation process, this has not materially affected the proposals contained within the supplement and the majority of changes are simply to reflect that the supplement is no longer a draft document.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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26. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for the IRMP supplement and is attached at Appendix 8.
27. EIAs will also be completed for actions within the IRMP supplement prior to implementation where appropriate.
28. The information provided in the EIA explains the ways in which different protected groups may be affected by the aims and objectives set out in the IRMP supplement, specifically the planned changes resulting from the reinvestment in services. It is believed that the proposals that are contained within the IRMP offer benefits to all groups within our communities.
29. The range of duty systems detailed within the IRMP supplement and IRMP 2017-2020 give staff increasing flexibility, the ability to self-roster and the potential to increase their earnings. Given the 24/7 role of the Fire & Rescue Service there will be times when staff who have caring responsibilities will be impacted by the hours of work. Opportunities to limit the impact will be considered as the changes are implemented so long as they don't have an adverse impact on the Service's ability to meet its statutory duties. The Authority has supportive flexible arrangements in place for any member of staff who wants the organisation to consider a request for a different pattern of working.
30. The public forums, when considering the proposals presented to them, were reminded to consider the nine protected characteristics, plus socio-economic disadvantage which the Authority also includes. They believed the proposals were advantageous to all protected groups.

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### **Staff Implications**

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31. In order to improve services to our communities the Authority is seeking to re-invest in the front line, increasing firefighter and protection officer numbers.

32. In order to deliver its plans it is necessary for the Authority to make changes to duty systems. Principal Officers have engaged with staff in recent months to explain these proposals through their “PO Talks”. The increase in firefighters, fire engines and protection officers has been welcomed by all staff not just those in operational roles. The changes have also been the subject of extensive engagement with the representative bodies, running parallel to the public consultation.
33. The Joint Working Group consisting of Officers and Staff/Trade Union Representatives will be convened to oversee any implementation.
34. The Fire Officers Association (FOA) has provided its full support to the duty system changes being proposed by the Authority. Engagement with the FBU over this issue is on-going. The CFO is keen to implement the changes on the basis of agreement with all representative bodies, where possible, particularly given the really positive impact the proposals would have on our operational response model and community risk management. . The outcomes from the detailed consultations on all these matters will be reported back to the Authority at a later date in line with normal practice.

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### **Legal Implications**

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35. MFRA continues to discharge its statutory duties under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 by the actions detailed in this report and attached appendices.

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

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36. The financial implications were considered and approved during the development of the Authority’s budget in February 2019.

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

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37. This document details the strategic approach to risk management, encompassing what the Authority plans to do to manage risk, demand and vulnerability in the coming two years.

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

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38. The IRMP and the supplement are the key documents by which Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority manage its resources with full consideration of the impact on risk to life for the people of Merseyside. This document details the actions we intend to take to achieve our Mission.

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### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

CFOA	Chief Fire Officers Association
FBU	Fire Brigades Union
IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Plan
MFRA	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
MFRS	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
ORS	Opinion Research Services