

## MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY BUDGET MEETING		
DATE:	25 FEBRUARY 2021	REPORT NO:	CFO/009/21
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DEB APPLETON	REPORT AUTHOR:	JACKIE SUTTON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	SRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM, IRMP OFFICER		
TITLE OF REPORT:	DRAFT IRMP 2021-24		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX 1:	DRAFT IRMP 2021-24
	APPENDIX 2:	DRAFT EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members approve the release of the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2021-24 for a period of 12 weeks' consultation prior to adoption and implementation, whilst noting that the proposals outlined within the IRMP may change to reflect the views expressed during the consultation process.

### Recommendation

2. That Members approve the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2021-24 attached at Appendix 1 to be subject to a period of 12 weeks' consultation prior to final approval, publication and implementation. A designed version of the draft IRMP will be published for consultation purposes.

3. The Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 and the National Framework for England 2018 outline the legal requirements to produce an IRMP. The primary objective for this process is to make each Fire and Rescue Authority more responsive to locally identified risk and needs, and better able to deliver safer communities.
4. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA)'s IRMP is a medium term plan that captures future aspirations and the strategic direction for the Authority in order to deliver its Mission: "Safer Stronger Communities; Safe, Effective Firefighters".
5. The outcome of the 12-week consultation will be reported back to Authority following the consultation period. The draft Integrated Risk Management

Plan (IRMP) 2021-24 contains the proposals being considered by the Authority in order to meet the challenges it faces whilst aspiring to continue to deliver an excellent Service to the residents of Merseyside.

6. This IRMP considers existing and emerging risk, demand and vulnerability such as the ageing population of Merseyside, socio-economic vulnerability to fire and other risks, impact and requirements of the Grenfell enquiry report, impact of fire and rescue service inspection, marine and weather-related incidents such as flooding, the increased risk of terrorism.
7. In general, our work to deliver against our previous IRMP progressed well but there are key areas that the Authority wishes to address between 2021-24 to improve public safety and reinvest in the services we provide. These areas are:

## **Emergency Response**

### **Fire engines and firefighters**

We propose to make changes to our operational response that will increase fire engines from 29 (plus the Special Rescue Appliance) to 31 (plus the Special Rescue Appliance) by expanding our high performing Hybrid duty system.

We want to:

- Introduce a Hybrid duty system at Kirkdale fire station
- Combine the stations at Aintree and Croxteth fire stations to create a superstation (Hybrid/Specialist Rescue station) along with a new Training and Development Academy to be built on land at Long Lane, Aintree
- Combine the duty systems at Liverpool City and Kensington fire stations to create a Dual Station Hybrid – including a Specialist Fire Ground Command function
- Introduce a Stinger/Scorpion fire engine at St Helens to replace the complementary crewed Combined Platform Ladder. This type of appliance would allow us to fight all normal fire types, but it can be used as a water tower and also has a lance attached that can be used on roof spaces or light industrial buildings.

In addition, our drone capability will be introduced after being proposed in our previous Plan.

We will continue to assist the ambulance service when it is facing a surge in demand, like that experienced through the pandemic (whilst maintaining response to fires/other emergencies) – this action will overarch the previous IRMP Action.

We want to create specialist fire stations at:

- **Liverpool City** - Command and Control (Incident Command Unit and Welfare) - provided on a retained basis (deployed within 30minutes)
- **Wallasey** – Marine and Ships Firefighting (Marine Firefighting capability inc – Breathing Apparatus Support Unit (BASU), General Purpose Unit (GPU) and Marine & Tunnel Pods - provided on a retained basis (deployed within 30 minutes)
- **St Helens** – Hazmat – Hazmat Environmental Protection Unit (HMEPU) & Bulk Foam Unit Pods - provided on a retained basis (deployed within 30 minutes)
- **Long Lane** – Search & Rescue (Urban Search and Rescue – Specialist Rescue Appliance) – immediately available supplemented on a retained basis.
- **Kirkdale** – Terrorist Response Specialist Capability and Flood Response (Mass Decontamination Unit (MDU) / Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) Specialist Responder) – immediately available supplemented on a retained basis.
- **Belle Vale** – Water (High Volume Pump) inc all LLAR stations – immediately available - staffed on a whole time (permanent) basis
- **Heswall** – Wildfire – All terrain vehicle – Complementary crewed
- **Formby** – Wildfire – All terrain vehicle – Complementary crewed

The proposal to introduce specialist teams will have an initial impact on the time taken to train our firefighters (skill acquisition), so we propose to also create a temporary capability (a 32nd fire engine) during 2021 aligned to the Comprehensive Spending Review to ensure there are no negative impacts on our emergency response due to specialist training. We will also use this opportunity to explore different flexible and family friendly duty systems and approaches to emergency response.

Also, we will continue to work with North West Ambulance Service to develop an Integrated Demand Management Programme for times of high demand such as during the Covid 19 pandemic. This is a development on our previous IRMP action to enter into Emergency Medical Response alongside the Ambulance Service.

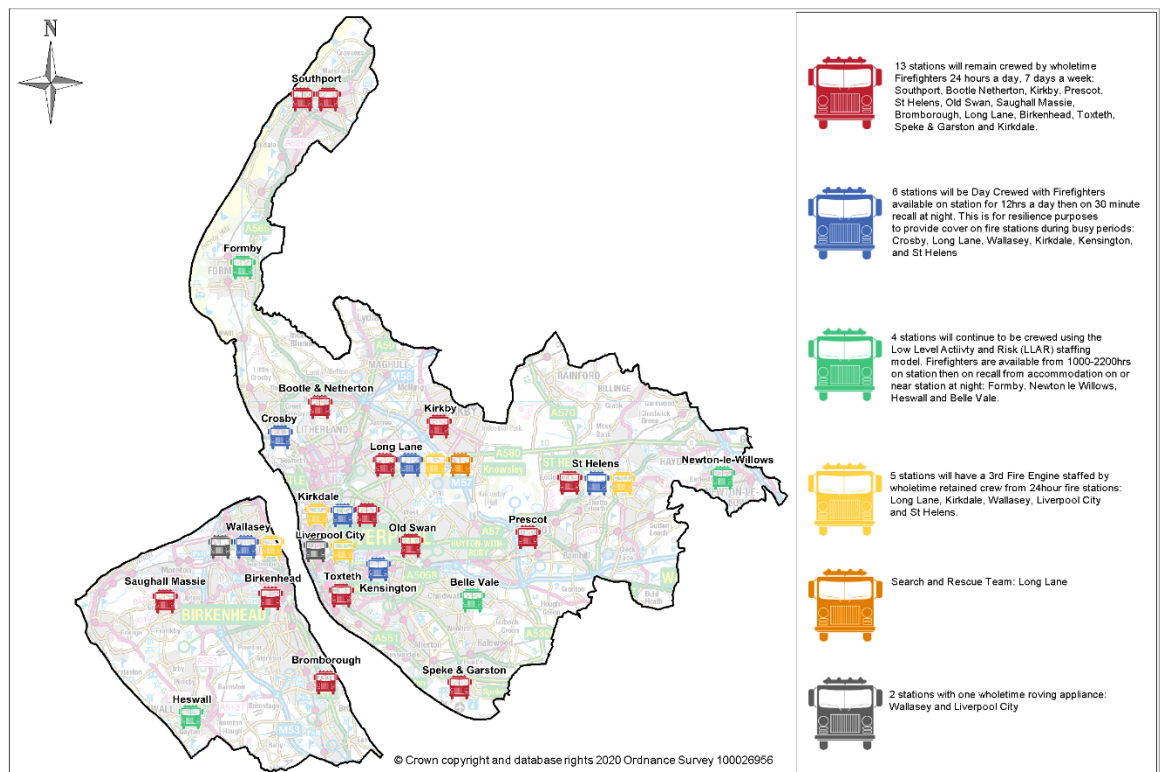
We want to:

- Build a £25m state of the art Training and Development Academy on Long Lane, Aintree. This would see the combination the stations at Aintree and Croxteth fire stations to create a superstation (Hybrid/Specialist Rescue station) along with the new Training and Development Academy to be built on land at Long Lane, Aintree
- This new Training and Development Academy would include an enhanced secondary control room (a facility used by our Command and Control team if

the main control room at headquarters is unavailable) given the work we do nationally.

- We are also looking into how a new Training and Development Academy could be used to provide training for other fire and rescue services to support our role as National Resilience Lead Authority and we are working to find funding to help with this.
- We used research and analysis to find the best location for a new Training and Development Academy and fire station, and the Long Lane site is the most suitable for us to maintain our level of emergency response for the Croxteth and Aintree areas.
- The performance of the Service (its average response time) is improved on the basis of these changes. Having improved significantly based on the previous changes implemented in 2019/2021.

The map below shows how our fire engines would be located and crewed if the proposed changes were approved and the new Training Academy and fire station is approved at Long Lane, Aintree



## Prevention

We intend to continue with our successful approach of targeting our Home Fire Safety Checks and Safe and Well visits at the most vulnerable people in Merseyside. Our research continues to show us that the over 65s are still at most risk of dying in fires in the home, but we know that poverty and deprivation play a part in increasing risk from fire too, so we want to:

- Continue with our person-focused approach to Home Safety – targeting those over 65 and the most vulnerable due to socio-economic deprivation in Merseyside – knowing that smoke alarm ownership has diminished in these areas.
- Complete 50,000 Homes Safety Visits per year (150,000 in total over the life of this Plan)
- Complete 10,000 Safe and Well Visits per year (30,000 in total over the life of this Plan)
- Reach 6,000 (10%) of homes in the highest deprived neighbourhoods using targeted campaigns based on analysis of accidental and fatal fires data in addition to the Index of Deprivation 2019 which identifies the areas of highest poverty and deprivation.
- Recruit Prevention staff who represent the communities we represent so we can understand and better support the diversity of Merseyside
- We will renew our focus on working with the Registered and Private Rented Housing Sector to help us identify those most in need, as well as those aged over 65.
- Our fire stations and Prevention teams will be joined by staff from all departments to take an organisation-wide approach to monthly themed monthly Community Safety campaigns that help us interact with large numbers of people, often working with partner organisations too.

## **Protection**

Like many other fire and rescue services we want to increase the resources we have available to carry out our legal duties in relation to Fire Safety and our risk Based Inspection Programme. The tragic Grenfell Tower fire in 2017 has meant, quite rightly, that there is an increased focus on high rise residential buildings and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service also has responsibilities for safety in relation to petroleum, explosives and underground railways.

We want to:

- Build up our team of specialists working in this area by increasing our Protection Officers, initially temporarily using Government funding. These roles would be four uniformed (Watch Manager B) and four Grade 8 non uniformed posts. In the longer term we would like to make these new Protection Officer roles permanent if funding is available.
- Visit every high and high risk premises (7,500 over the life of the Plan)
- Introduce a new Management Information System that links the areas of Protection, Firefighter Safety and Prevention activity and keeps all our risk information in one place
- Increase mobile/agile working for staff
- Deliver a full response to Grenfell Tower Fire Inquiry recommendations
- Complete 6,336 medium to low risk visits over the life of the Plan. These will be carried out by our fire station-based firefighters.

- Fire Safety Inspectors will visit every registered Petroleum storage site in Merseyside.
- Monitor and assess all applications for new Explosive Storage Licences as well as responding to complaints received relating to any of these sites.

## **Preparedness**

We know how important it is to plan and prepare to make sure our emergency response services are delivered efficiently and effectively.

We want to:

- Continue working with Blue Light partners to support them and improve services to the public whilst maintaining our response to fires and other emergencies.
- Continue to review how up to date operational risk information is gathered and provided to operational staff at incidents and how this can be shared with other fire and rescue services across borders so we can work together effectively
- Provide the most up to date kit and equipment to firefighters to keep them safe whilst making sure that we have the right type of fire engines and other emergency appliances to deal with the risks we have identified.
- Make sure that staff know how to command incidents assertively, effectively and safely at incidents. This includes comprehensive training and exercising against all foreseeable risk, including high rise incidents, terrorist attacks, marine response, emergency medical response, flooding and wildfire incidents which will enable us to continue to adapt to an ever changing environment
- Prepare our fleet of vehicles for a move to alternative fuels
- Introduce ways of staffing our Fire Control that reflects the demands on the service, increases the resilience of the team and enhances development opportunities for staff

## **National Resilience**

We will continue to provide a high level of support to the whole UK in relation to National Resilience, coordinating resources to help tackle major incidents such as floods, building collapse, explosion and major fires.

We want to:

- Ensure National Resilience capabilities are available and fit for purpose through our assurance process. This includes visits to all fire and rescue services where National Resilience assets are based, large scale exercises and training
- Support the Government's plans to refresh the National Resilience Assets

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## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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8. A draft Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared (Appendix 2) and will be further developed with feedback from the 12 week consultation process.

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## **Staff Implications**

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9. The IRMP will undoubtedly have implications for staff in relation to management structures, duty systems and ways of working.
10. As such, any implications arising from the proposals detailed within this report will be subject to ongoing dialogue with the representative bodies and staff themselves to ensure they have full sight on any changes which may impact on them directly.
11. The views of staff will be considered as part of the consultation process.
12. The implications to staff will be a key consideration in the implementation of the IRMP 2021-24 – in line with the Authority's engagement principles.

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## **Legal Implications**

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13. Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 places a statutory duty upon every Fire and Rescue Authority to put in place an IRMP having regard to the National Framework for England 2012. This report is the last stage of the process to fully discharge statutory duties placed upon the Authority to produce and publish an IRMP.

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

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14. The principles established during the public consultation forums undertaken by Opinion Research Services were used in the development of the 2017-20 IRMP and supplement 2019-21 and remain appropriate for the 2021-24 IRMP.
15. The new proposals are designed to address some of the impact of previous cuts in Government grant to maintain the high levels of service received by the Merseyside public and improve resilience.
16. No alternative proposals than those contained within the IRMP were suggested during the budget planning process.
17. All resourcing requirements associated with any IRMP proposals have been incorporated into the 2021/2022 – 2025/2026 Medium Term Financial Plan, MTFP. The MTFP is on today's agenda and outlines the background to the MTFP. As the Government only announced a one-year financial settlement it

means the longer term Authority funding position is unknown. The MTFP includes some key assumptions around future funding and costs from 2022/2023, and any variation to these key assumptions may require the Authority to review the proposed resource allocations.

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

18. The IRMP details the strategic approach to risk management, encompassing what has been done to manage risk and what will be done in the years to 2024.
19. Should these IRMP changes not be approved then the original plans would be implemented which could result in a higher level of risk being experienced by the public.

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

20. The IRMP is the primary means by which the Authority sets out how it will prepare for and respond to risk within its communities.

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### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**CFO/010/19** IRMP Supplement 2019-21

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### **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**