

| MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY | | | |
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| MEETING OF THE: | AUTHORITY (ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING) | | |
| DATE: | 11 JUNE 2026 | REPORT NO: | MO/11/2627 |
| PRESENTING OFFICER | MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES | | |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: | MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES | REPORT AUTHOR: | MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES |
| OFFICERS CONSULTED: | SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 25/26, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT) | | |
| TITLE OF REPORT: | ANNUAL SCRUTINY REVIEW 2025/26 | | |
| APPENDICES: | APPENDIX A: | SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PLAN 2025/26 | |

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with a review of the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee in 2025/26.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members;
 - a) note the continued work of the Scrutiny Committee throughout 2025/26 and the matters considered from the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan; and
 - b) approve the item forming part of the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2025/26 that remains outstanding (Management of Contaminates) be carried forward into 2026/27.

Introduction and Background

3. The Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2025/26 was created as a result of Members of the Scrutiny Committee attending a scrutiny workshop in June 2025 presented by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer.
4. Members will recall the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2025/26 was agreed at the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on the 22nd July 2025 as contained in appendix A.
5. This report details those items from the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan which were presented and considered by the Scrutiny Committee throughout the municipal year for 2025/26.

6. In 2025/26 the Scrutiny Committee met three times to consider areas of focus from the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan as below:

| Meeting Date | Scrutiny Topic |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 22 nd July 2025 | Pathway to Net Zero (fleet) |
| 22 nd July 2025 | Annual Health, Safety and Welfare Report 2024/25 |
| 18 th September 2025 | Enforcement and Prosecution Update |
| 18 th September 2025 | Culture Action Plan |
| 9 th April 2026 | Response Key Performance Indicators |

Pathway to Net Zero

7. Area Manager, Dave Watson presented to Members an update on the Authority's progress on its pathway to net zero in respect of the Authority's fleet.
8. Members noted that the long-term aim was for the Authority fleet to move to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles in a practical and financially stable way. Members acknowledged the fleet contained six 48v Mild Hybrid vehicles and 15 self-charging hybrid blue light response vehicles. Dave Watson explained that the infrastructure was not in place yet for the Authority to move to full electric vehicles and noted that incremental changes were taking place to not exhaust the Authority when the infrastructure was not yet in place.
9. Members commended officers for their approach not to compromise on response times and waiting for the correct infrastructure to be in place before purchasing full electric vehicles. Members were reassured that careful decisions would be made regarding how budget was spent to ensure reliability and resilience remained paramount.

Annual Health, Safety and Welfare Report 2024/25

10. Station Manager Kevin Hollis updated Members on the performance of the Service in respect of health, safety and welfare for the year 2024/25.
11. Members scrutinised the delivery against the Local Performance Indicators (LPI) relating to operational staff injuries, including injuries on duty, at incidents, at risk critical training. Members were also provided with a statistical breakdown of the support the Occupational Health Department had provided to staff for the same year. Members also scrutinised the number of RTC's the Service had been involved with and the positive culture in reporting near misses to avoid future injuries or incidents.
12. Members praised the Authority for welfare provisions in place to support staff. Members were also reassured by the scrutiny of health and safety reporting to help identify trends, operational learning and the use of new technology to support health and safety procedures in place.

Enforcement and Prosecution Update

13. The Scrutiny Committee considered the report and presentation by Area Manager Kevin Longshaw, Head of Protection. The presentation to Members provided a detailed update on progress against the identified recommendations from the 2023 HMICFRS report. It was highlighted that significant focus had been placed on Enforcement and Prosecution, as well as high-rise building safety following the Grenfell Tower tragedy.
14. Kevin Longshaw detailed the actions in relation to Enforcement and Prosecution from the last inspection, including assurance that its use of enforcement powers prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce risk, completion of audits in line with the Service's policies, inspectors loss of confidence in the prosecution process and how the Service could improve how it shares information with other enforcement agencies. Members were updated on all work undertaken on these actions and were reassured they would be monitored through the Functional Delivery Plan, the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) internal review process, and the Authority's wider governance framework.
15. Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on all areas of the report and presentation and noted the progress to date against the HMICFRS recommendations.

Culture Action Plan

16. Director of People and Organisational Development, Nick Mernock presented an update on the Culture Action Plan.
17. Members were informed that the Plan focused on values, culture, and misconduct and was developed in response to the 35 HMICFRS recommendations produced, 20 of which applied directly to Fire and Rescue Services.
18. Members were given detail of the work undertaken by officers to address the actions identified in the Cultural Action Plan including training provided to ensure all staff understood the NFCC Core Code of Ethics, the Service's Leadership Message, the Service Values and expectations regarding behaviours and how to challenge poor behaviour. Members were advised clear guidance had been provided to staff on how to raise a grievance or whistleblow along with a Joint Statement issued with representative bodies encouraging staff to anonymously report concerns through Safecall.
19. Members commended the report as excellent, noting the importance of middle management and acknowledged the positive work undertaken with trade unions.

Response Key Performance Indicators

20. Group Manager Neil Mooney delivered a presentation detailing the Service's performance against the Key Performance Indicators relating to operational response. These included performance indicators relating to call handling, alert to mobile and first attendance of an appliance at all life risk incidents.
21. The Committee praised Neil Mooney for the very comprehensive report. Members also expressed how impressed and reassured they were in the constant review of the Service's performance and openness to learning through its dynamic approach to scrutiny and continued improvement.

Scrutiny Forward Work Plan

22. At each meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, Members considered a report submitted by the Monitoring Officer that sought views on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan and the identification of potential topics for the Committee to scrutinise. Members were advised that the document remained 'live' and as such, could be added to, as Members deemed appropriate.
23. As the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2025/26 has now concluded, it is noted that the one item remains outstanding: Management of Contaminates. The remaining item was provisionally to be presented at the last meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2025/26. However, notification of an inspection by the Health & Safety Executive was received and scheduled for May 2026. Therefore, it is recommended to carry forward this item to the next Scrutiny Forward Work Plan to allow feedback from the inspection to be included.

Equality and Diversity Implications

24. There are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications for the annual overview of the scrutiny topics presented throughout the year.

Staff Implications

25. There are no direct staff implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

26. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

27. There are no direct financial considerations arising from this report.

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

28. There are no direct implications arising out of this report.

Environmental Implications

29. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

30. The scrutiny of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Services actions contained on the Scrutiny Forward Work Plan 2025-26, provides a transparent and accountable process.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

NONE