

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	4 SEPTEMBER 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/11/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE, DEB APPLETON	REPORT AUTHOR:	DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE, DEB APPLETON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, DAVE MOTTRAM. STRATEGIC PLANNING OFFICER, JACKIE SUTTON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ADVISOR, MICHELLE KIRK STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)		
TITLE OF REPORT:	CRMP MID-TERM CONSULTATION 2025		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	CRMP 2024/27, 2025 UPDATE
	APPENDIX B:	EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service's ('the Service') plans to carry out a mid-term Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024/27 consultation with stakeholders. The feedback from the consultation will advise both the progress and evaluation of the current CRMP action plan and the preparations for the 2027/30 CRMP.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note the CRMP mid-term stakeholder consultation taking place from August 2025.

Introduction and Background

3. Prior to Authority approval of the current CRMP in 2024, the Service carried out both stakeholder engagement (before the CRMP was written) and stakeholder consultation (prior to the approval of the final CRMP). The engagement was to establish themes and potential actions for inclusion in the CRMP and the consultation was a formal 12-week process requesting feedback on the draft CRMP before final approval.
4. The engagement process consisted of five independently facilitated focus groups (one in each district council area) and staff engagement through Principal Officer (PO) talks and other meetings. The formal consultation consisted of one Service-

wide focus group, a community engagement meeting, an online survey, representative body meetings, PO talks and other staff engagement. The Service is confident that the process followed provides meaningful and representative feedback and is compliant with the CRMP Fire Standard, but it was noted in the Service's 2023 HMICFRS inspection report that it is also good practice to maintain engagement with stakeholders to discuss emerging and changing risks and the delivery of plans.

5. It was also noted that the Service could use the Government Social Research Functions "A guide to inclusive social research practices". This document has been considered and incorporated as appropriate. It is considered that the existing consultation and engagement broadly follows the guidance in terms of representation but other good practice such as easy read documents have also been considered and an easy read version of the Service's update on CRMP progress will be produced. Officers have also spoken to colleagues in other Fire and Rescue Services to help understand what other approaches are available.
6. The CRMP Group (chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer) which governs the development and delivery of the CRMP, has been considering the most appropriate ways of engaging with stakeholders. The Strategic Leadership Team has agreed the following mid-term consultation approach summarised in paragraphs 7 to 9.
7. A community engagement breakfast meeting at Service Headquarters on 29th August with a group drawn from the Authority's Community Engagement Advisor's contacts. It is expected that approximately 20 people will attend from a variety of community groups and the meeting will focus on the Service's delivery of its CRMP. This event will be facilitated by Service and attended by the Chief Fire Officer.
8. One two-hour public focus group on 1st September facilitated by an organisation that takes a philosophy-based approach to stakeholder engagement in the public sector. The focus group will consider fire-related risks on Merseyside, what the Service is planning to do to address those risks and what the public thinks is important. Unusually this group will take place without any Authority staff present (something that has worked well for other Fire and Rescue Services). This approach is being taken to see whether there is any difference in the type of feedback or engagement when the Service is not represented in the focus group.
9. There will be an update on progress against the CRMP actions for external stakeholders and staff (Appendix A) including a QR code link to a short survey (options to send feedback via email or the post will be available). This will be available on the Services website, sent to partner agencies, promoted through social media and internal communications and will also be made available in hard copy to leave with residents and business owners after Officers have visited their premises. It is expected that the update and survey will be available from September to November, but that period can be extended.
10. Following the mid-term consultation, evaluation will be carried out to determine the value of this approach.

Equality and Diversity Implications

11. An EIA has been completed and is attached at Appendix B. Matters relating to the type of consultation materials (online v hard copy, easy read) and representation of participants in focus groups and meetings have been considered and the consultation has been planned to make sure that all stakeholders can access the consultation and contribute.

Staff Implications

12. Staff are important stakeholders in the CRMP process, and the update document and survey will be promoted through the Service's usual staff engagement channels.

Legal Implications

13. The requirement to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (now referred to as the Community Risk Management Plan) is a requirement of the 2018 National Framework for Fire and Rescue Services. That requirement includes stakeholder consultation.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

14. The cost of facilitation of the focus group is £2,100 which is included in existing budgets. Printing costs for the CRMP update document can also be contained within existing budgets.

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

15. There are no risk management or health and safety implications associated with this update report.

Environmental Implications

16. It was considered that only making the CRMP update document available online would have the least environmental impact, but the EIA indicates that this could inadvertently exclude some of the most at-risk members of society, whose views may be heard less often. As a result, producing hard copies too is felt to be more inclusive. Copies will be printed in small batches and if that approach is not as successful as is hoped, the consultation can easily move entirely online.

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.*

17. The CRMP is the key document that details the Authority's medium-term plans for its communities. Consultation and engagement during the life of the plan is an important way of helping the Authority understand the impact of its plans and also provides useful information for future planning.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRS	M erseyside F ire and R escue S ervice
CRMP	C ommunity R isk M anagement P lan
HMICFRS	H is M ajesty's I nspectorate of C onstabulary and F ire & R escue S ervices