

Draft CRMP 2024/7 consultation event

Friday 17th May 2024 (9.30 – 11.30)

Merseyside community groups

Community groups represented:

LCR Pride

Citizen's Advice Liverpool

Merseyside Society for Deaf People

Sahir House (LGBTQ+ Asylum Seeker & Refugee Support)

Sefton older person's forum

People First (learning disabled and Autistic people)

Merseyside Police community liaison

MFRS Officers present:

CFO

Director of Strategy and Performance

GM CRMP projects

Community Engagement Advisor

The Chief Fire Officer provided a presentation for the attendees that introduced the role of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) and in particular explained the concepts of Risk, Demand and Vulnerability that underpin the Service's approach to Community Risk Management Planning.

In relation to this initial introductory session the participants gave the following feedback:

Q Have we considered producing slides and documents in Easy Read?

A This is something we have just started to look at and we hope to introduce it.

Q Are we aware of BSL 999 and do we promote it to communities?

A We are aware of it but would be happy to promote it more widely. The participant was also invited to discuss this further with Control and this will be arranged.

Q are we able to translate documents into other languages and or provide interpreters?

A Our website includes Recite Me which provides a translation service and staff can use Language Line for interpretation.

We would welcome community groups reviewing Recite Me to help us understand how effective it is for them.

We will also look at how we can promote accessibility more widely.

Q There are digital barriers for some communities, so we should also look into the impact of that and not rely entirely on digital communications.

A We have posters and leaflets too but will consider whether we can do more.

The CFO then explained the 15 proposals contained within the CRMP:

MORE RESOURCES			
	Proposal	Why?	Expected benefits
1.	Increase fire engines from 32 to 34	MFRS has been building resources in innovative ways since 2019 and wants to continue doing so	Enhance specialist response and give increased resilience across Merseyside (e.g., for larger incidents)
2.	Reintroduce a Small Fires Unit (smaller vehicle; used at times of peak demand; crewed by 3 firefighters)	A smaller vehicle needing fewer fire fighters could help when there are large numbers of lower level (not life-risk) incidents	Could free up traditional fire engines for bigger/life risk incidents
3.	Protect fire engine availability for life risk incidents	Sometimes fire engines become unavailable at short notice (because of e.g., staff sickness). MFRS is looking at ways to avoid this and still deliver a response to non-life risk incidents with three firefighters when it happens	Maximises fire engine availability while protecting life risk resources
4.	Enhance water rescue capability through introducing either a sub-surface drone or a dive team	MFRS is the only emergency service that is able to attempt a rescue when people are in the water. It wants to increase the chances of saving people in that situation	Ability to save the life of someone who has gone into the water more often than able to now
5.	Work with partners to plan for and respond to the emerging threat from fires involving alternative fuels (e.g. Lithium-ion batteries and Hydrogen fuel cells)	Increased use of Lithium-ion batteries for items such as mobile phones and vehicles including scooters, bikes, and cars creates challenges for the FRS and its partners in Merseyside and beyond. Same applies to use of Hydrogen fuel cells in cars/other vehicles	MFRS and Local Resilience Forum will work with the industry to help reduce risks for firefighters and the public

Comments and observations:

Proposal 1

The participants agreed with the proposal. One participant mentioned that it would be helpful if sirens could only be used when necessary as they could affect people with sensory issues.

Proposal 2

The participants mentioned that this could be useful if only used when needed and as such, might be a good use of money. They also mentioned that its use could help improve response times for life risk appliances

Proposal 3

The participants understood the proposal and felt that it was common sense with some asking why it hadn't been done before. Some also suggested increasing staff numbers but understood budget constraints.

Proposal 4

The participants understood why MFRS would want to do this and they initially thought that a drone might be a more efficient use of resources than a dive team. When the current role of the marine rescue team and their potential role in a dive team was explained, the participants considered this a more viable option than they had initially. They were supportive of the Service's recent investment in the Fast remote controlled floatation devices.

Proposal 5

The participants supported the proposal and wondered whether MFRS could work with other organisations to make sure more easy to understand advice is provided to people who buy items containing LI-Ion batteries. They also mentioned working with Trading Standards to improve testing of products.

During this section the participants also discussed why different types of fire extinguishers are no longer as easy to distinguish (because they are now all red but with different coloured labels). They also asked whether more could be done to make sure landlords comply with their fire safety duties.

WORKING SMARTER			
	Proposal	Why?	Expected benefits
6.	Introduce 'enhanced mobilisation' via pre-alert system	MFRS wants to improve its response times (which are already fast). 'Enhanced mobilisation' would alert a crew earlier and put them on standby to attend an incident	MFRS would potentially arrive at an incident up to 1 minute earlier than at present
7.	Use improved technology in the MFRS Control Room, such as 'Aura' and '999 Eye'	MFRS currently moves fire engines around when those on key stations are at an incident or not available. Software/technology will help it better map exactly where all appliances are at all times	Help improve response times and cut down on unnecessary movement of fire engines, allowing them to respond to incidents/do more community work in their own station area
8.	Use Watch Managers to carry out different duties that add value, while responding to incidents in different ways	MFRS does not think Watch Managers need to be based on station all the time They could carry out different duties that add value to the organisation and respond to incidents in a different way?	Could provide more resources in areas that are sometimes stretched, like Protection (fire safety)

Proposal 6

The participants were supportive of this proposal

Proposal 7

Regarding 999 Eye, there was some concern that this application, which would allow Control to access video on a member of the public's mobile phone (with permission) would not work for deaf people. It was discussed that there might also be people who do not want Control to access their camera and people who don't have a smart phone, so this is not something that we would expect to be used by everyone. That said, MFRS will look into the potential for adaptations.

During discussions the participants asked whether there is a non-emergency phone number for the FRS. The reporting processes used during the bonfire period were discussed as an example of this.

Proposal 8

There were no observations on this proposal

ADDING VALUE IN MERSEYSIDE			
	Proposal	Why?	Expected benefits
9.	Work in areas of higher risk to educate and inform the communities in those areas about known and foreseeable risk (e.g., flooding and wildfire) and the actions they can take to make themselves safer?	MFRS wants to do even more to help its communities understand the risks in their areas and what they can do to help themselves deal with them	People living in specific communities are more informed/better prepared for events that might affect them
10.	Continue to assist the Ambulance Service in relation to cardiac response and expanding this to people who have had falls	MFRS believes it can support (not replace) the ambulance service when people have cardiac arrests or falls	Help save more lives and improve quality of life by supporting the North West Ambulance Service
11.	Target Prevention work toward those most likely to die in a fire and areas of highest deprivation	This is already an important part of what MFRS does; more data shared by other organisations will help it target its Prevention services even more accurately. MFRS also know that people in sheltered accommodation are at highest risk, so it wants to do even more to protect them	More people will be safer because MFRS knows more about the risks they face and can better target interventions to better reflect that risk People living in sheltered accommodation would be safer
12.	Following the introduction of a national Building Safety Regulator to address legal changes following the Grenfell Tower incident, MFRS will introduce a new framework for fire safety-related enforcements and prosecutions to improve public safety	MFRS has already done a lot to support the implementation of the Grenfell Tower inquiry recommendations and these next steps will help it improve safety even more	Residents of high rise and other high risk buildings will be safer from fire

Proposal 9

The participants were supportive of this proposal.

Proposal 10

The participants were supportive and wondered whether this could be suited to a small fires unit.

Proposal 11

The participants were supportive of this proposal.

Proposal 12

The participants were supportive of this proposal.

THE WIDER PICTURE			
	Proposal	Why?	Expected benefits
13.	Use the new Training and Development Academy for national and international training	Investment in the new Training and Development Academy at Long Lane, Aintree can benefit UK and international fire and rescue services	MFRS can provide national training and assurance in relation to National Resilience capabilities through its enhanced training facilities – demonstrating best practice
14.	As lead authority for National Resilience, MFRS will work with the Home Office on the programme to refresh current National Resilience assets (New Dimension 2)	The New Dimension programme funds the equipment and training that makes sure England's fire and rescue services can call on specialist capabilities to help them deal with a wide range of large or national-scale incidents	The programme is designed to ensure that fire and rescue services are able to save as many lives and protect as much property as possible through the quick deployment of the specifically designed capabilities
15.	Focus on delivering Net Zero	MFRS is keen to play its part in reducing carbon emissions in the ways it builds and maintains its fire stations and other buildings, how its staff travel, and the equipment they use to deliver services	Although this proposal would continue several years after the end of this plan, MFRS knows it has to make changes now

Proposal 13

The participants were supportive of this proposal.

Proposal 14

The participants were supportive of this proposal.

Proposal 15

The participants were supportive of this proposal.

Further comments:

The participants were pleased to hear about the community rooms on stations, they suggested the Liverpool Access to Advice Service and Community Champions as useful contacts for accessing harder to reach people.