

## Lead Member Feedback Form 2013/14

**Lead Members Name : Councillor Barbara Murray**

**Lead Member Role Title : Lead Member for Operational Response**

**Supporting Officers Name : AM Dave Mottram**

**Number of meetings that have taken place between Lead Member and Supporting Officer during the year : 4 to date**

**At the first meeting held between the Lead Member and the relevant Officer Support, was a Forward Work Plan devised, and reviewed and updated at each subsequent meeting during the year? No**

**Please outline nature of these meetings and any agreed outcomes, including any information, guidance and updates which have been provided to you with regard to developments in the area for which you are appointed Lead Member.**

Meetings were arranged to improve my knowledge of Operational Response by explaining in detail all the factors affecting Operational Response including national context and how well MFRS compares to other authorities.

As a result of these meetings my understanding is that Operational Response is crucial to situations such as putting out fires, rescuing people in emergencies for example traffic accidents or any other incidents that are totally dependent on the speed of the service to respond to get a better outcome, that is, when the speed of response can save lives, reduce injury and ensure that any medical needs are met as quickly as possible.

The main factors affecting the speed of response include:

- communications to ensure the correct response is sent to the correct situation;
- having a well trained team/staff
- availability and numbers of engines and fire fighters;
- having the right equipment to deploy for the given situation;
- proximity to any given incident

As a result of government cuts there have been some unprecedented changes to the service this year. All these changes such as merging stations, changing the work practices, reducing engines and fire fighters could potentially have a negative impact on Operational Response times and put the public and fire fighters at risk.

The supporting officer has kept me fully briefed on all these aspects and the anticipated impact on response times.

I am pleased that despite all these changes response to an emergency is ten minutes which compares very favourably with other authorities nationally.

In my opinion changes to date have been well managed by the authority.

**Have any reports been written in relation to this area of work, if so please confirm the title and meeting which the report was submitted to?**

The guidance document has been completed and submitted to committee services. This document will be submitted to the Chair and committee services. A power point presentation outlining changes to service which have impacted on response times has been produced by AM Mottram. I am happy to present this powerpoint to any committee as required.

**What involvement did you have in the reporting process?**

The guidance document was completed with the supporting officer.

I am writing this report.

The first draft of the power point has been prepared by AM Mottram. I have had oversight of the powerpoint and I will alter if necessary before presentation to ensure facts are presented in an acceptable format for my colleagues, no acronyms etc.

**What were the outcomes as a result of the report?**

None to date.

**Have you been involved in any of the Authority's Task and Finish Group's? If so please detail how your Lead Member experience has assisted you as part of the Task and Finish Group.**

I have not been required to attend a Task and Finish Group in this respect. However, my improved understanding of Operational Response has informed my attendance at meetings, strategy and budget days and more broadly as a member of Liverpool Council.

**What other meetings within Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority or Partners, do you attend which have an influence on your Lead Member Area?**

I am a member of the Community Safety and Protection Committee and the Performance and Scrutiny Committee. It has been invaluable to my membership of both these committees to have an overview in terms of Operational Response and that has informed my decision making and my scrutiny of the policy changes for the authority that impact on response time.

**How has attending the above meetings assisted you in your role?**

My understanding as Lead Member for Operational response has been significantly improved when explaining the impact of the cuts to MFRS to others and to my grasp of changes MFRS is undergoing as a result of cuts.

I do champion MFRS and the fact we maintain a ten minute response time despite cuts. It is very useful to have well developed arguments supported by facts when doing this.

**How has undertaking the Role as Lead Members enhanced your level of knowledge of this particular service area?**

As stated above. Also I have been very keen to ensure that my decision making in this respect has been carefully balanced in terms of the safety of the public and the safety of fire fighters.

Operational Response is the core business of the authority if it is to retain its reputation and in this respect all members need to be fully briefed which is why I am keen to give a presentation on this as part of my role.

**Please detail any lessons learnt (eg what you would have liked to include or done differently)?**

It would have been helpful to have been more fully briefed with respect to the outcomes required of the role at the beginning of the appointment.

**What has been the main benefit to your appointment in this role?**

The main benefit is the fuller understanding of the importance of Operational Response to the extent I can converse with confidence when representing MFRS and I can question policy development in terms of any impact on current response times.

**Any other comments you would like to add**

It would have been useful to have a short induction for all lead members, for example, at a learning lunch and a timetable for the year stating from the outset date report(s) needed and date(s) presentation to be tabled to a given committee.

**Support Officer Comments:**

Councillor Murray has been a fully involved and committed Lead Member for Operational Response.

The last twelve months have seen some of the largest changes to how MFRA responds to incidents and how its operational workforce operates. Councillor Murray has kept abreast of these changes and developed a keen insight during our quarterly meetings.

Councillor Murray has constructively challenged in key areas of transition for Response and has offered valuable assistance, support and advice from her own experience of workplace change.

I believe the working relationship we have developed is effective and has benefitted the Service/ Authority. I hope to see this continue and strengthen into 2014 -15

Area Manager Mottram 31/3/14