MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**		
DATE:	**14 DECEMBER 2023**	**REPORT NO:**	**CFO/62/23**
PRESENTING OFFICER	**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER PHIL GARRIGAN**		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**DEB APPLETON**	**REPORT AUTHOR:**	**DEB APPLETON**
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	**STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM**		
TITLE OF REPORT:	**COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLANNING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT 2023**		

APPENDICES:	**APPENDIX A:**	**CRMP PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT 2023 REPORT**

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the outcomes of the recent public engagement regarding the preparation of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for 2024/27 (previously IRMP).

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note the outcomes of the public engagement which will be considered as the draft CRMP is prepared.

Introduction and Background

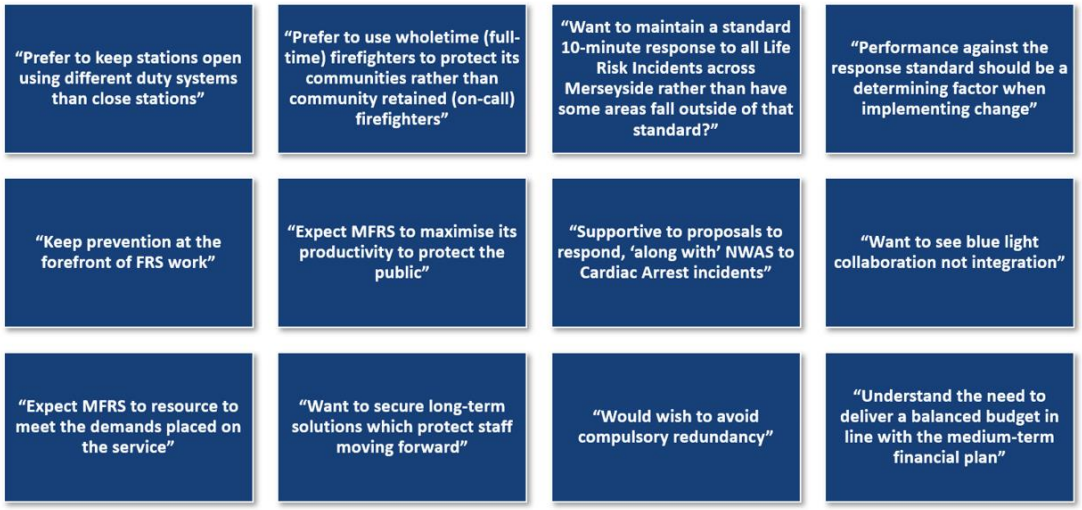
3. Members will recall that at the September 2023 Strategy Day, the Chief Fire Officer outlined some general themes to be considered in the preparation of the 2024/27 CRMP.

4. Those themes, having been considered by Members, were presented to members of the public in focus groups that took place in October 2023 in what is classed as public engagement rather than consultation (because these focus groups take place at a formative stage in the planning process). The focus groups were facilitated by Opinion Research Services, who have worked with the Service for many years on public consultation and engagement projects. Public consultation will take place in spring 2024, when the Authority has approved the draft CRMP.

5. In addition, Principal Officers are undertaking a full round of Principal Officer talks with all staff and those talks will include engagement regarding the potential CRMP themes.

6. The full engagement report is attached as an appendix to this report, but a summary of the findings can be found below.

7. The first matters the public were asked to consider were regarding the planning principles that the Authority has developed over a number of years in consultation with the public. Although the public continued to support the majority of those principles, there was strong support for changes in some areas and these will be built into the CRMP planning process:



"The consensus was that MFRS's 'Planning Principles' remain appropriate overall, but there was support for amending or removing the one that reads 'keep fire stations open using different duty systems rather than close stations.' This was now considered irrelevant in light of fire station mergers in several areas, which have had a positive effect on response times, staff working environments, and efficiency.

While avoiding compulsory redundancies where possible was considered important still, this priority - which was developed at a time of austerity and service cuts - was thought to be 'of its time' and no longer needed given MFRS is now building its capacity once more.

In terms of potential additions, principles around staff mental health and wellbeing, workforce diversity, and employee relations/business continuity were suggested."

8. Regarding potential themes for the CRMP, there was support amongst the attendees of the focus groups for all the Authority's potential themes, but the extent of that support differed.

"…there were very high levels of agreement with the Service considering the following for inclusion in its CRMP 2024-27:

> Keeping fire engines 'on the run' by crewing them with three firefighters to non-life risk incidents until four firefighters become available through overtime or moves from other stations (99%).
>
> Targeting Prevention work toward those most likely to die in a fire and the areas of highest deprivation (97%).

Working in areas of higher risk to educate and inform the communities in those areas on known and foreseeable risk and the actions they can take to make themselves safer (97%).

Using the new Training and Development Academy for national and international training, subject to requests, with any funding raised redirected to benefit Merseyside communities (97%).

Increasing fire engine numbers from 32 to 34 to increase resilience for high demand periods (94%).

Continuing to assist the NWAS in relation to cardiac response and expanding this to people who have had falls (93%).

Further enhancing Protection staffing to do more proactive enforcement work, particularly by introducing a building safety regulator (90%).

Support was slightly lower, but still strong, for MFRS reintroducing a Small Fires Unit to help when there are large numbers of lower level (not life-risk) (88%); using improved technology in its Control Room (88%); and enhancing water rescue capabilities through introducing either a sub-surface drone or a diving team (85%).

There was least agreement (69%) with MFRS using its Watch Managers differently to carry out different duties that add value and respond to incidents in a different way, mainly as participants were unsure about the current role of a Watch Manager and what any changes might mean in practice."

9. Officers will now consider the comments of the public and staff as the draft CRMP is prepared. That report will be presented to the Budget Authority in February 2024.

Equality and Diversity Implications

10. The way in which MFRS consults public engagement is with the aim of creating representative focus groups. Attendance at the groups was as follows:

GENDER	AGE	WORKING STATUS	LIMITING ILLNESS OR DISABILITY	ETHNIC GROUP
Male: 35 Female: 39	16-34: 19 35-54: 33 55+: 22	Working full- or part-time: 46 Not working/ retired: 28	15	White British: 68 Ethnic minority: 6

11. Because the meetings were inclusive, the outcomes are broadly indicative of how informed opinion would incline on the basis of similar discussions.

12. An EIA will be completed as the CRMP is developed.

Staff Implications

13. Staff are being engaged with in relation to the CRMP themes, though the Principal Officer talks process.

Legal Implications

14. The National Framework for Fire and Rescue Services requires and FRS to engage with stakeholders as it develops its Integrated Risk Management Plan (now CRMP).

Financial Implications & Value for Money

15. The cost of the engagement was £16,825 which was contained within existing budgets.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

16. The above factors are considered as part of the CRMP process.

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 (previously IRMP) is the main document in which the Service sets out how it will deliver its Vision and Purpose.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/111/11 If this report follows on from another, list the previous report(s)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA **M**erseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **A**uthority

MFRS **M**erseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **S**ervice