BRIEFING NOTE:	**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**		
DATE:	**12th JANUARY 2023**	**REPORT NO:**	**CFO/56/22**
PRESENTING OFFICER	**ACFO DAVE MOTTRAM**		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**GM SEAN McGUINNESS**	**REPORT AUTHOR:**	**SM MIKE BROADLEY**
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	**WM DAVE TOPPING – OPS EQUIPMENT HYWYN PRITCHARD – HEAD OF PROCUREMENT AM GED SHERIDAN STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM**		
TITLE OF REPORT:	**IDENTIFICATION AND PROCUREMENT OF OPERATIONAL KIT AND EQUIPMENT**		

APPENDICES:	**N/A**

Purpose of Report

1. To inform the Scrutiny Committee of the process Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service follow to procure Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and operational kit to ensure its suitability for staff and value for money.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members:
   (a) note the report and accompanying presentation and
   (b) scrutinise the processes in place to identify and procure PPE and operational kit to bring into the Service

Introduction and Background

3. The Operational Equipment Team ('OET') are responsible for the research, development and procurement of all PPE that MFRS firefighters currently use which includes items such as:
   - Technical rescue jackets
   - Compartment firefighting jackets
   - Firefighting Trousers
   - Helmets
   - Gloves
   - Water rescue PPE

4. The OET sits on a regional working group made up of the neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services. Each Fire and Rescue Service will take turns in leading on procurement programs whether it be clothing, equipment or services, where the contract exceeds £50,000.

5. Working with MFRS's procurement team and members of the working group, the

OET will follow a rolling timetable of events in order to award a contract. For example, the current tender for PPE runs from May 2022 to April 2023.

6. Once the scores have been completed, companies will be invited to send a range of their products to the group to be tested. The most recent tests of firefighting PPE was conducted in November 2022 and utilised a cross-section of the workforce of all shapes, sizes, and gender to ensure that the product is inclusive.

7. Following this, all the evidence is evaluated and the providers are notified whether they have been successful or not.

Equality and Diversity Implications

8. MFRS OET aim is that PPE is inclusive and fit for purpose. . In order to achieve this the OET are working with the MFRS gender network, NW working group and suppliers.

Staff Implications

9. By ensure that our staff are provided with the correct PPE that is fit for purpose and fits the wearer ensures that they are able to respond to any incident within Merseyside, and maintain our fire cover across the service by reducing times that appliance are unavailable post incident due to contaminated PPE.

Legal Implications

10. The tender process is governed by the Public Contract Regulations and the Authority's Contract Standing Orders.

11. The Authority has a duty of care to its employees to provide sufficient PPE for the risk related activity and such a process ensures Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority ('the Authority') complies with this duty. .

Financial Implications & Value for Money

12. The tender process ensures we establish the best value for money for the Authority as well as the life cycle of the kit/PPE and the protection that it affords our staff. When entering a new contract, they are normally for a fixed term with an option for users to extend by up to two years. By conducting our due diligence checks during the tender process we can be assured that the items will be long-lasting and repairable if issues occur.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

13. All PPE, when it becomes contaminated, is bagged and left in a safe place for collection where it is sent to our local laundry provider. The provider washes the garment and then inspects it for damage and which point it is repaired and condemned.

14. It is the responsibility of the employer to provide the appropriate level of PPE for the task and the responsibility of the employee to wear and use the PPE correctly Although each member of staff is personally fitted with PPE, . The OET now have an on line tool that allows staff to provide feedback on uniform and PPE if there is an issue, fault or concern. This system will allow an audit trail of what has been done to resolve the issue whilst providing feedback to the originator..

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.*

15. By providing our staff with the correct PPE that is fit for purpose, fits the wearer and is ethical allows us to serve our community to the best of our ability whilst providing the best value for money.

16. By providing our staff with the best PPE we are ensuring that we are prepared to respond to any incident within Merseyside swiftly and effectively whilst ensuring we are providing the safest possible working environment for our staff.

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 is the physical and legal entity. When writing reports MFRA is the “object”.
MFRS	**M**erseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **S**ervice is the service provided by MFRA. When writing reports MFRS is the “action”
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
OET	Operational Equipment Team