

## **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

### **REVIEW REPORT TO THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**23 JULY 2015**

**SUBJECT: FORWARD WORK PLAN FOR THE PERFORMANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR 2015/16**

**REPORT NUMBER: CFO/066/15**

**APPENDICES: APPENDIX A: DRAFT FORWARD WORK PLAN 2015/16**

**REPORTING OFFICER: CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY**

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: JANET HENSHAW**

**OFFICERS CONSULTED: KELLY KELLAWAY – DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To request that Members consider and approve the draft Forward Work Plan (FwP) for the Performance & Scrutiny Committee for 2015/16; and review the items included and proposed timescales for reporting.

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. For 2014/15, a structured FwP was devised for the Authority's Performance & Scrutiny Committee, which enabled items for scrutiny to be scheduled throughout the year.
3. When devising the FwP and reporting timescales, consideration was given to a range of factors including:
  - The relevance of the topic to MFRA business.
  - The scale of the topic and resources required.
  - Any work requiring completion prior to the scrutiny review.
  - The time required for the work to be completed.
4. This approach also involved the Authority's appointed Lead Members in the scrutiny process, by identifying which Lead Member and Support Officer would lead on each scrutiny item and be responsible for the production of reports or presentations to the Committee.

5. This added structure to the Lead Member process, providing those appointed Members with key areas to focus on throughout the year; and ensured that effective and structured scrutiny occurred, with meaningful outcomes, which added value and helped to inform decisions of the Authority.
6. However, given the increasing pressure that Officers are under and changes which occurred throughout the year, it has been necessary for some items within the FwP for 2014/15, to be deferred.
7. As such, the draft FwP for 2015/16 includes those items deferred from 2014/15, as well as additional items which have been requested for scrutiny at recent meetings of the Authority.
8. When devising the draft FwP for 2015/16, the same factors have been considered as for 2014/15; and responsible Lead Members and Support Officers have been identified to lead on each scrutiny item.
9. Members are asked to consider the draft FwP for 2015/16 (attached at Appendix A); and review the items included, identifying any items that they may wish to remove from the plan, or indeed any additional items they wish to be included.
10. Members are also asked to consider whether the timescales proposed for reporting back to the Performance & Scrutiny Committee, are appropriate.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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11. There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report, however there may be implications for topics included within the FwP.
12. Equality and diversity issues in relation to any individual items of business within the plan will be considered; and equality impact assessments completed where necessary, when the item is reported on.

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### **Staff Implications**

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13. The only direct staff implication in relation to this report will be in the requirement for Officers to participate in and support scrutiny reviews and produce informed reports.
14. There may be specific staff implications in relation to topics for scrutiny included within the FwP, which will be detailed fully when the outcome of the review is reported back to Members.

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**Legal Implications**

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15. Fire and Rescue Authorities are not required by law to provide scrutiny, however it is included in the Fire & Rescue Services National Framework 2012 as notable practice for Fire and Rescue Authorities to demonstrate transparency in relation to decisions made.
16. Having an agreed FwP for the Performance & Scrutiny Committee, will ensure that scrutiny remains aligned to the Authority's strategic direction and is conducted in a way which adds value.

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**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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17. Although there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, financial implications are always considered when reporting to the Authority and when the Authority makes decisions.
18. As the financial challenges facing Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority looks set to continue for the foreseeable future, it is crucial that the Authority robustly scrutinises key issues, to provide clarity and aid the decision making process.

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**Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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19. There are no direct risks, or health and safety or environmental implications arising from this report.
20. However, effective scrutiny will assist the reduction of risk by enabling risks to be identified; and appropriate ways of mitigating those risks to be ascertained.

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**Contribution to Our Mission:** *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

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21. Given the scale of the financial challenge facing Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority, effective, robust scrutiny will ensure that the Authority continues to make the best possible decisions, to provide the best possible service to the public of Merseyside; and continues to deliver against its Mission.

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**Recommendation**

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22. That Members;
    - a) Consider the scrutiny reviews contained within the draft FwP and identify any amendments or additions they wish to make.
    - b) Confirm for each scrutiny review contained within the FwP:
      - i) The approach they wish to take.
      - ii) the date the review will be reported back to the Performance & Scrutiny Committee.
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- iii) Whether a Task & Finish Group will be required to undertake the review.
- iv) Whether any further aspects of scrutiny are required in relation to the review.
- c) Following consideration of the above, set and approve the Forward Work Plan for the Performance & Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal Year 2015/16.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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