

<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>6 OCTOBER 2016</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/074/16</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>DEB APPLETON</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>[AUTHOR NAME]</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>			
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>“SAFER INFORMATION SHARING PROJECT UPDATE</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	
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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To inform Members of the contribution of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority to the national Chief Fire Officers Association information sharing project “Sustained Action for Elderly Risk” (SAfER).

### **Recommendation**

2. That Members note the content of this report.

### **Introduction and Background**

3. In 2014, the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), in collaboration with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, successfully bid to the Fire and Rescue Service Research and Training Trust for £57,460 (over two years) to deliver a complex project which the organisations concerned felt would have a significant effect on the way all Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) deliver preventative work.
4. The particular focus of the project was on the sharing of the NHS over 65’s data (sometimes referred to as Exeter Data) with all UK fire and rescue services, as this group has been identified as being at particularly high risk from fire. Cheshire and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service proposed the project because a local agreement meant that both Services were already in receipt of over 65s data and they believed that the rest of the UK could benefit from a similar arrangement. The project was delivered for CFOA by project manager Evan Morris and supervised by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, which also provided the information governance support to the project. It involved developing data sharing agreements and the practical arrangements to enable the data to be shared, through work with the Government departments and health and social care agencies that hold and process relevant risk data. The project was designed to help save lives, reduce injuries and improve the benefits and outcomes that can be achieved when FRS personnel come into contact with vulnerable and elderly

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people. It was supported by the Cabinet Office Data Sharing Unit, DCLG, the Government's iNetwork and the Office of the Information Commissioner.

5. The project, which began in November 2014 is now nearing its conclusion and an update on its progress and what has been delivered is set out in the following paragraphs.

### **Project delivery**

6. In December 2014 the project gained the support of Sir Bruce Keogh (NHS England's Medical Director and Caldicott Guardian). Following this approval, the Project Manager, with governance support from Merseyside FRS entered into a complex and protracted period of negotiation with NHS England and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC), which have responsibility for the governance of NHS information and management of the data.
7. As this was the first time that NHS information had been widely shared with the FRS, it was agreed to start the process with English FRS. There was considerable groundwork required to assure the NHS that the recipients would process the data in an appropriate way and to determine exactly how the information would be shared.
8. A number of technical methods by which the data could be shared, some of which would have been very costly, were considered. Ordnance Survey (OS) were particularly helpful to the project as they agreed to code all 9.5 million records and work with HSCIC to ensure the effective transition of the data to the 45 English FRS .
9. Initially, there was understandable caution on the part of the NHS regarding the secure processing of the data once it had left that organisation's control. The project team worked closely with NHS England over a long period of time to develop a suitable information sharing agreement (ISO), and with the help of the Information Commissioner's Office, agreement was reached. In the summer of 2015 all 46 Chief Fire Officers of the English FRS signed the ISO. In September 2015 the HSCIC distributed the data to the FRS.
10. Negotiations around the cost of the processing and transfer of the data resulted in NHS agreeing to fund the initial costs. However, work is still ongoing with the NHS to deliver the annual data refresh to all FRS at no cost, as it is considered that the benefits to the NHS of interventions that result from sharing the data will far outweigh the cost of data transfer.
11. Since the delivery of the data to the English FRS s, the same process has been completed for Welsh FRS and is underway for Scotland. The Northern Ireland FRS has decided that it does not wish to participate at this time, but may be interested in the future.

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## Outcomes

12. Individual FRS have already commented on the usefulness of the over 65s data for their individual fire prevention initiatives and strategies, but more work will be undertaken by CFOA to evaluate the benefits. For example, in Merseyside the over 65s data now forms the core of the Home Safety Strategy, with up to 70% of home fire safety checks being delivered to over 65s.
13. One effect of the project is that it has resulted in a broader strategic understanding within the NHS of the role that the FRS can play in the improvement of the health of vulnerable groups of people through working in collaboration with health and other partners. Conversations at the highest level of the NHS resulted in the development of the Fire Health Summit to explore the potential of the relationship. The first Summit took place in May 2015 and the third will take place in October 2016. In addition, Simon Stevens, Chief Executive of NHS England was the opening speaker at a Data Sharing conference delivered by CFOA in support of this project. A number of potential projects have resulted from this relationship, which although outside the original scope of this project, are linked to the improvement of the health of vulnerable people.

## The current situation

14. The project manager, with information governance support from Merseyside FRS, is currently working with NHS England to review and update the information sharing agreement to accommodate the additional requirements of using over 65s data to carry out Safe and Well visits. Discussions are still ongoing regarding the extent to which “patient” data will be processed and the implications in relation to FRS information governance.
15. Alongside this, work is underway with HSCIC to arrange for the transfer of refreshed data to English fire and rescue services and Ordnance Survey are again assisting in this process.
16. The project manager, Merseyside FRS and CFOA are currently considering what work will be required to ensure that the refresh of data will continue after the close of the project and who will carry it out. The work is likely to include;
  - An annual review of the information sharing agreement with NHS England and the ICO to ensure it is fit for purpose,
  - Liaison with HSCIC and Ordnance Survey to ensure that correct data is delivered to each FRS (e.g. a review of FRS boundaries),
  - Liaison with each FRS in England, Wales and Scotland to maintain records of key contacts, the specific secure email transfer details for each service and ensuring that revised information sharing agreements are signed by all Chief Fire Officers.
17. CFOA plan to deliver a conference in early 2017 to explore the outcomes of the project and report back on the evaluation of the use of the data.

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## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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18. The project was specifically aimed at providing more information about a high risk group of people (over 65s) to all UK fire and rescue services. This has now been successfully delivered to all but two fire and rescue services, with the Scottish FRS expected to receive the data in the near future and the Northern Ireland FRS not wishing to participate at this time.

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## **Staff Implications**

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19. Staff at Merseyside FRS have been involved in this project and contributed to the overall outcomes at all stages. All staff that deliver home fire safety checks are now using this data.

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## **Legal Implications**

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20. MFRA continue to act within the remit of the Data Protection Act 1998 and any other relevant data sharing information agreement in place. Merseyside FRS has been providing information governance support in relation to this project, along with NHS England and the Information Commissioner's Office.

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## **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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21. The project has cost £57,460 (over two years). CFOA was successful in bidding for this funding from the Fire and Rescue Service Research and Training Trust. The cost of providing the information governance support was allocated to Merseyside FRS from this grant.

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

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22. The project is specifically aimed at reducing risk amongst a high risk group of people (over 65s).

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

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23. The receipt of over 65s data is a significant part of the Authority's Home Safety Strategy and is vital to the delivery of home fire safety checks and safe and well visits to vulnerable people.

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

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## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**MFRA** Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority is the physical and legal entity. When writing reports MFRA is the "object".

**MFRS** Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service is the service provided by MFRA.  
When writing reports MFRS is the “action”

**E.G.** You are employed by the Authority (MFRA). The job you do forms part  
of the Service (MFRS) provided by the Authority (MFRA).  
If in doubt use MFRA.