

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority

Scrutiny Committee

You are summoned to attend the meeting of Scrutiny Committee to be held on

Monday, 24 April 2023 at 14:00

**At Fire Service Headquarters, 99 Vauxhall Road, Nechells, Birmingham B7 4HW
and digitally via Microsoft Teams**

for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Agenda – Public Session

Item No.

1	To receive apologies for absence (if any)	
2	Declarations of interests	
3	Minutes of the Previous Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 23 January 2023	3 - 8
4	Fire Control Performance Report - Quarter 4 2022-2023	9 - 18
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Distribution:

Gurdial Atwal - Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, David Barrie - Member, Jasbinder Dehar - Member, Zahir Hussain - Member, Sybil Spence - Chair of The Scrutiny Committee, Vera Waters - Member, Patricia Young - Member

This meeting of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority will be held at Fire Service Headquarters. However, please note that although the meeting will be open to the public, there will be limited capacity due to ongoing social distancing measures.

The meeting will also be held digitally via Microsoft Teams allowing observers to access remotely. To access the meeting, please contact a member of the Strategic Hub, West Midlands Fire Service, who will be able to provide login details (please note that Microsoft Teams is not required to join a meeting) or provide guidance if you wish to attend in person at HQ.

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This agenda and supporting documents are also available
electronically on the
[West Midlands Fire Service Committee Management Information](#)
[System](#)

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee

23 January 2023

Conducted as a public meeting at Headquarters and digitally via Microsoft Teams

- Present:** Councillor Spence (Chair), Councillor Atwal (Vice-Chair), Councillor Barrie, and Councillor Hussain
- Virtual:** Councillor Dehar, Councillor Waters, Sarah Middleton, Co-Optee.
- Officers:** Simon Barry, Kamla Devi-Ahir, Tom Embury, Kirsty Tuffin, Kelly Whitmore, Pete Wilson (virtual).

01/23 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Young.

02/23 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

03/23 **Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 07 November 2022**

Resolved:

1. That the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 07 November 2022 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings subject to Councillor Hussain's attendance being added.

04/23 **Scrutiny Review Option**

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Scrutiny Review Option report that outlined proposed options for the next Scrutiny Review.

The Committee were advised that the last Scrutiny Review on Safe and Well had concluded in November 2022.

Following discussions with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, it was proposed that the next Scrutiny Review

focused upon the services training and career development. It would be intended that progression and development into leadership and management roles within the service, with specific focus upon underrepresented employees, would be reviewed. The Chair of the Committee emphasised the desire for the review to consider opportunities to allow employees to reach the required educational levels for management roles.

The Committee were also advised that the Collaboration and Transformation Committee on Monday 12 December 2022, referred the topic of blue light collaboration between West Midlands Fire Service and West Midlands Ambulance Service for review. Following discussions with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, it was recommended that this be reviewed in the next municipal year 2023-2024.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the proposed topics for the second scrutiny review be noted.
2. That it be agreed that a scrutiny review of the services training and development, and specifically in areas identified in the terms of reference once developed, be approved.
3. That it be agreed to defer a scrutiny review of blue light collaboration with the Ambulance Service to 2023-2024 Municipal Year, be approved.

05/23

Fire Control Performance Report Update – Quarter 3 2022-23

Kelly Whitmore, Group Commander – Fire Control, presented the Fire Control Performance Report – Quarter 3 2022-23, that outlined the operational performance of Fire Control over a three-month period.

The Committee were advised that as per the report, a total of 17,749 emergency calls were received between 1 October 2022 and 31 December 2022 across both West Midlands and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services.

13,096 (74%) were the for West Midlands and 4,178 (24%) were for Staffordshire. A total of 2% of calls had been taken

on behalf of other services. Of the total number of calls received, Fire Control mobilised to 51% of the incidents for the West Midlands and 52% for Staffordshire. The mobilisation ratio of calls had been dependent upon the following:

- Call challenging automated fire alarms (AFAs)
- Call challenging special service calls that were deemed non-emergency
- Repeat 999 calls
- Use of 999eye footage/imagery

During Qtr. 3 the median call handling time by Fire Control had increased to 101 seconds compared to Qtr. 2. The increase in time handling had been a result of the number of new entrants that joined the Fire Control team, the introduction of Vision 4, a new command and control system, and enhanced questioning to support proportionate and appropriate mobilising of resources.

The Committee were advised that 999eye, which assists Fire Control with intelligence led mobilisation and resource management, had been used a total of 1,954 times during Qtr. 3. This system allowed Fire Control to receive images/footage from an incident and share it with responding personnel to assist early decision making.

Following queries on comparison data available for other Fire Services, Kelly advised that services used different systems and varied approaches across different control rooms so although comparison data could be collected, it would reflect a great difference in comparison. Members were also reassured that there had been a process in place for nuisance calls and the term 'repeat calls' referred to multiple calls for one incident. The Chair of the Committee praised the 999eye system.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Fire Control performance update for Quarter 3 2022-23, be noted.

06/23

Dispute Resolution Report 1 Jan – 30 June 2022

Kamla Devi-Ahir, Senior Business Partner, presented the Dispute Resolution Report that outlined the number, type and outcomes of discipline, grievance hearings and other dispute resolution including Employment Tribunal activity that has occurred during a six-month period 01 July 2022 to 31 December 2022.

The Committee were advised that 10 grievances were received and three disciplinary cases, all of which were gross misconduct, were received during the six-month period. Following analysis of the equality data there had been no impact on any specific group in regard to grievances and disciplinaries.

Five employment tribunal cases were due to take place over the upcoming 12 months, as per the report. The Committee were advised that the 'unfair dismissal/age discrimination' hearing had taken place and awaiting the outcome on 6 February. The 'unfair dismissal/disability discrimination' would be taking place on 13 February 2023 and finished 10 March 2023.

Following queries around the outcome of cases, specifically those that result in reviews of policies, it was agreed this information would be included in reports moving forward. Following queries around DBS checks, Simon Barry, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, re-assured members that members of staff that worked with vulnerable people completed an enhanced DBS check upon their appointment. The NFCC had been working on strengthening the pre/during employment checks on employees. It was agreed that an update would be brought to a future Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Dispute Resolution Report be noted.
2. That it be agreed that information on the outcome of cases, specifically those that result in reviews of policies, would be included in reports moving forward.

3. It was agreed that an update on the work conducted with the NFCC on DBS checks would be brought to a future Scrutiny Committee.

07/23

Business Continuity Arrangements (Verbal Update)

Simon Barry, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, provided a verbal update on the position of the service with Business Continuity Arrangements.

The Committee were advised that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) ballot on potential strike action would conclude on 31 January 2023. The service believed it was highly likely they would vote in favour of strike and therefore, had begun advancing the service's business continuity arrangements. It was highlighted that although it had been a different governance set up compared to the West Midlands, the London Fire Commissioner had offered an 11% pay rise (6% in 2022/23 and 5% in 2023/24), over the duration of two years for its employees.

Tom Embury advised the Committee that although the ballot would end on 31 January, an urgent meeting with the FBU and National Joint Council (NJC) would take place after the ballot had ended (Feb 8 2023). No announcement of strike action would be announced until this meeting had taken place.

Simon Barry emphasised the importance of the upcoming weeks for the service. Employees had been contacted again, following the feedback from Scrutiny Committee in November, on their intentions to strike but again had received a small number of responses. It was anticipated that should a strike happen, the service would have around 10 vehicles available, compared to its usual compliment of 60. A statement had been issued by the Chief Fire Officer, asking employees to respect each other during this difficult time and acknowledged employee's rights to take strike action.

The Chair of the Committee advised that she had a lot of respect for firefighters and did not feel a potential strike would take place. Simon Barry re-confirmed to members that the dispute had been a national issue. It was agreed that

should a strike take place; a report would be brought back to Scrutiny Committee on the level of resources the service had been able to obtain during the striking period. The Chair of the Authority and Chief Fire Officer would also be updated regularly with a future report into Fire Authority, if required.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the verbal update be noted.
2. That it be agreed that should a strike take place, a report would be brought back to Scrutiny Committee on the level of resources the service had been able to obtain during the striking period.

08/23

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022-2023

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Scrutiny Committee Work Plan for 2022-2023.

The Committee were advised that the Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference and Industrial action update would be added to the next Scrutiny Committee, due to take place in April 2023.

Resolved:

1. That the Scrutiny Committee Work Plan for 2022-2023, be approved.

The meeting finished at 11:07 hours.

Kirsty Tuffin Strategic Hub 0121 380 6906

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 APRIL 2023

1. FIRE CONTROL PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q4 2022/23

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the operational performance of Fire Control for Q4 be noted.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 This report is submitted to provide the committee with an update of the operational performance of Fire Control. The report covers a three-month period.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Emergency Calls Received and Call Handling

Fire Control receives the emergency calls and effectively manages the resources for both Staffordshire and West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services.

Staffordshire and West Midlands Fire Control received 16,085 emergency calls between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2023 across both brigade areas.

This was split 12,071 calls for the West Midlands (75%), 3,546 calls for Staffordshire (22%) and 468 calls from outside of service areas (3%).

The table below show the breakdown of calls received for West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) and Staffordshire FRS across a three-year period.

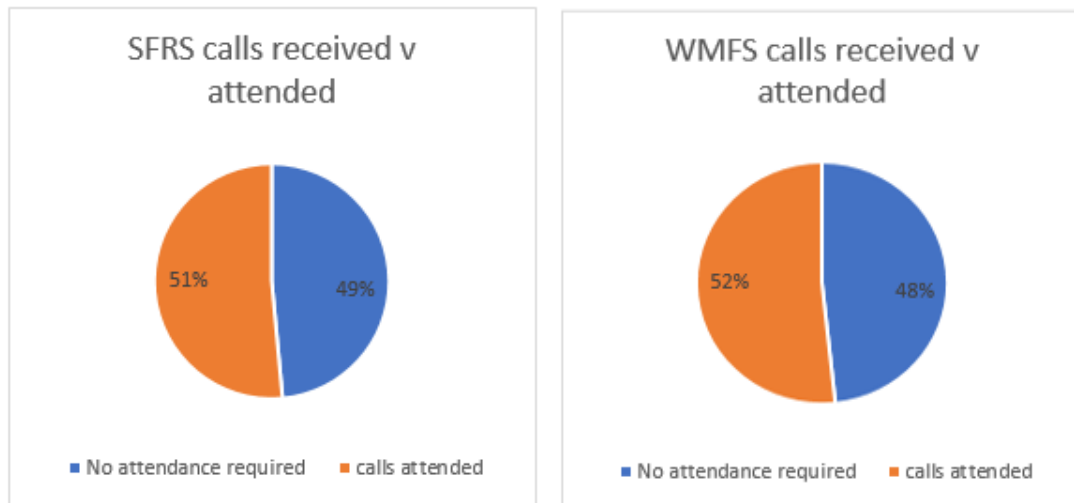
	WMFS			SFRS		
Period	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Q1 Apr-Jun	12,514	13,005	14,273	5,569	7,123	5,431
Q2 Jul-Sep	13,168	12,871	19,688	5,330	7,149	6,610
Q3 Oct – Dec	9,996	11,613	13,096	4,478	6,231	4,178
Q4 Jan-Mar	9,349	11,467	12,071	4,593	6,126	3,546

Of the 12,071 emergency calls received for WMFS across the reporting period; Fire Control mobilised to 6,241 (52%) incidents.

Of the 3,543 emergency calls received for Staffordshire FRS across the reporting period, Fire Control mobilised to 1,825 (51%) incidents.

This mobilisation to calls received ratio is because of several factors including –

- call challenging automated fire alarms (AFAs)
- call challenging special service calls which were deemed non-emergency
- repeat 999 calls
- use of 999eye footage and imagery



3.2 Call Handling

A key performance indicator for Fire Control is the length of time from answering a 999 call to mobilising appliances to category 1 (life and property) incidents. For these critical incident types, we aim to mobilise in under 80 seconds.

The data below shows the median average call handling times for life and property incident across Q4 with incident types broken down for both Staffordshire and West Midlands:

Brigade (excl OB)	SFRS		WMFS		Total	
Incident Type	Call Handling	Count	Call Handling	Count	Call Handling	Count
FIRE	104	134	101	349	101	483
FIRE PR	83	7	118	25	117	32
HOUSE FIRE	77	79	69	256	70	335
HOUSE FIRE PR	77	13	82	35	80	48
RTC	138	103	111	428	114	531
RTC PR	113	72	101	209	102	281

Fire Control's continued focus on mobilising with the required urgency is a key factor in survivability and limiting damage to property. The median call handling for the reporting period was 103 seconds, which is a 2 second increase on Q3.

The increase in call handling time across the last three reporting periods is due to several factors, including the number of new entrants joining the fire control team, the introduction of Vision 4, our new command and control system, and enhanced questioning to support proportionate and appropriate mobilising of resources.

Following a request from the Q3 22/23 Scrutiny meeting, a request was made to other Fire Control Managers to gather information on their call handling times so we can compare and evaluate whether increase in call times were being experienced across the country. The following information was shared.

Metropolitan Fire Control 1 – Did not share call handling data/performance indicators, however confirmed they had seen a significant increase in their call handling times following go live of their C&C system (VISION 4).

Shared Fire Control 1 – 90 second call handling target being met 80% - 90% of the time.

Shared Fire Control 2 – Do not measure call handling times therefore this data was not available.

General Fire Control 1 – Performance target is an average of 90 seconds, current performance is 105 seconds. Increase is linked to new starters and additional call handling questions required to gather information to enable appropriate risk assessment to take place.

General Fire Control 2 – Do not measure call handling times.

Shire Fire Control 1 – 60 second call handling time to be met 96% of the time for all call types. Only being met 25% of the time.

Five other Control Rooms had a 90 second target of 75%, 85%, 90% and 95%.

There were three other Control Rooms who had a 120 second target for 80%, 98% and 98% of all calls respectively.

The wide range of performance indicators across Fire Control rooms make it difficult to draw any comparisons, however at a recent national Control Room Managers

meeting almost all attendees anecdotally stated they had seen an increase in call handling times.

This was attributed to a high turnover of staff and loss of experienced call handlers and additional call handling requirements being introduced through National Operational Guidance and taken from National Operational Learning.

A review of the current performance measures of Fire Control is being considered. This will focus on the quality, success and impact of the decisions that are being made as a result of longer call handling times and how this has an overall impact on appliance availability, speed and weight of attack and environmental implications due to less appliance movements.

3.3 **Dynamic Mobilising**

Dynamic mobilising involves using resources flexibly and efficiently in our approach to emergency call management and mobilising, resulting in a proportionate and appropriate initial incident response. The approach enables Fire Control to reduce and increase an incident response to achieve the best match for the incident needs, which includes selecting the most appropriate number and type of resource.

Fire Control continue to utilise several tools to support decision making including –

- Dynamic emergency call handling
- Information gathered at the time of call
- Location of the incident, both geographically and demographically
- Repeat calls
- Footage and images from 999eye
- Number and type of incidents in progress
- Weather
- Time of day

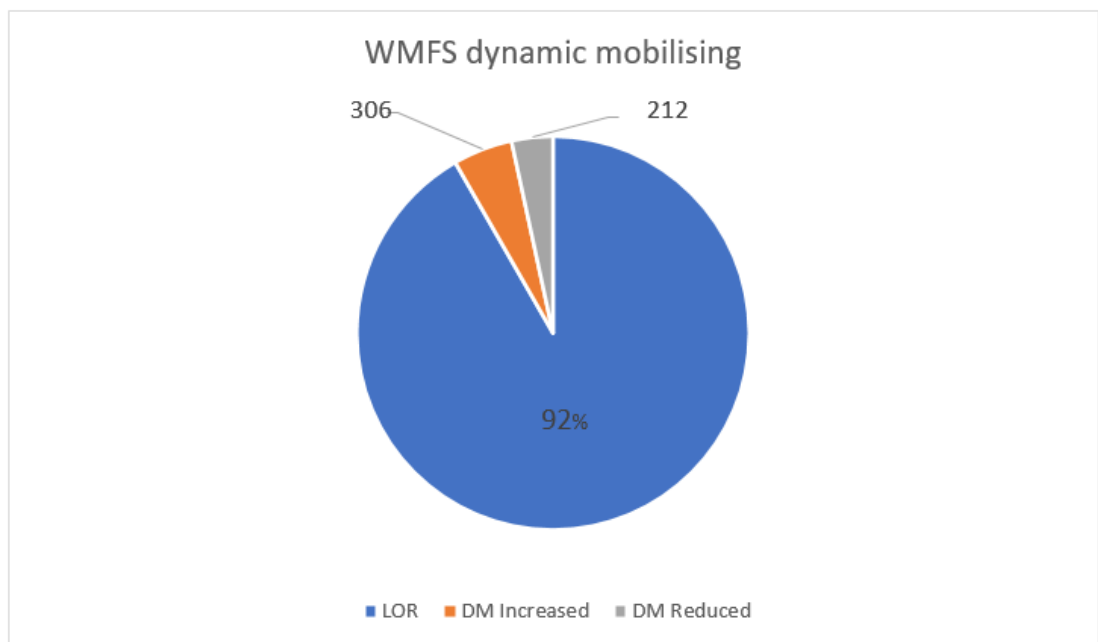
The charts below show the dynamic mobilising data captured for the reporting period.

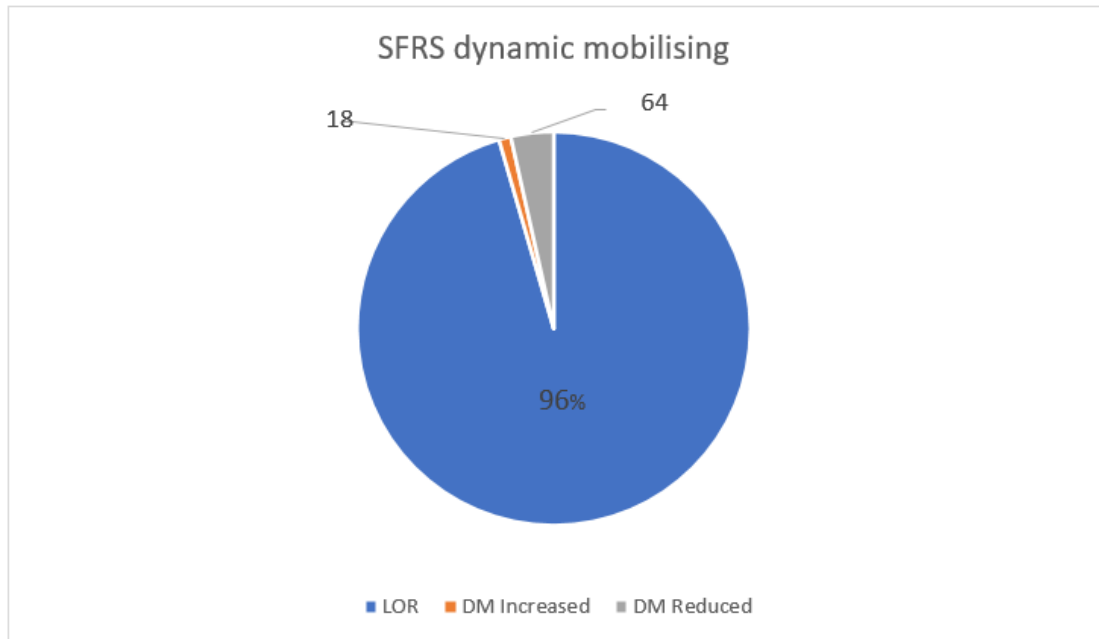
Fire Control dynamically amended the initial level of response 600 times throughout the quarter, increasing the attendance 324 times and reducing the attendance 276 times.

These totals are either an increased or decreased attendance from the standard pre-determined levels of response.

On the occasions Fire Control reduce the attendance, this results in an increased number of appliances being available for category 1 incidents and to support prevention and protection activities, thereby increasing the effectiveness of our resources.

On the occasions Fire Control increased the attendance, this supported the speed and weight of attack allowing for safe systems of work to be implemented leading to effective and efficient resolution of incidents.





3.4 999Eye

Intelligence led mobilisation and resource management enables Fire Control to send the most appropriate number and type of resource based on the level of risk, this directly contributes to the achievement of our risk-based attendance standards.

The 999eye system is enhancing the quality of intelligence and information that is received within Fire Control, thereby enabling Fire Control personnel to make more informed dynamic mobilisations using this technology; further supporting our key aim of sending the right level of resource to the right incident type.

The table below shows the recorded use of 999eye across the reporting periods.

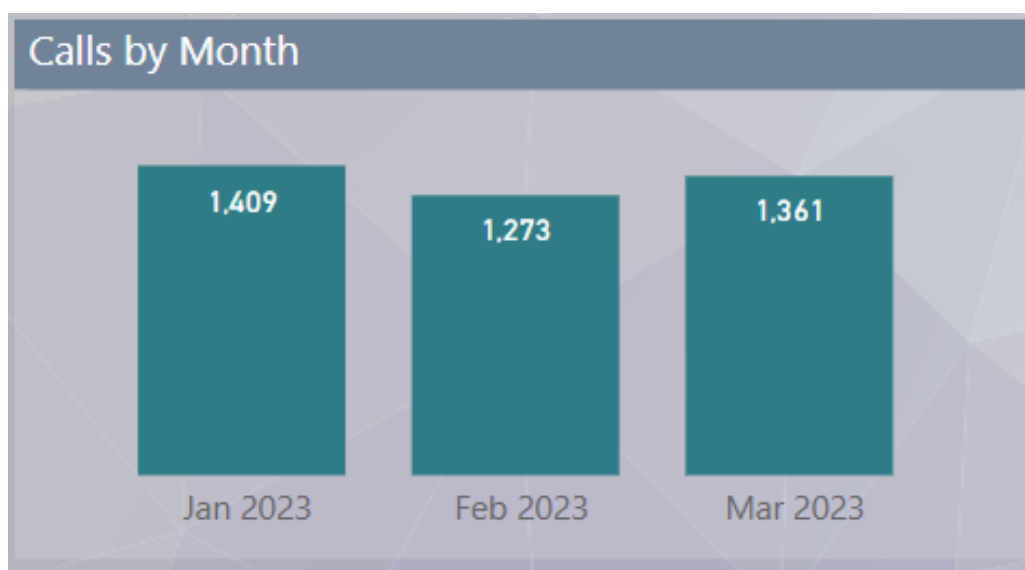
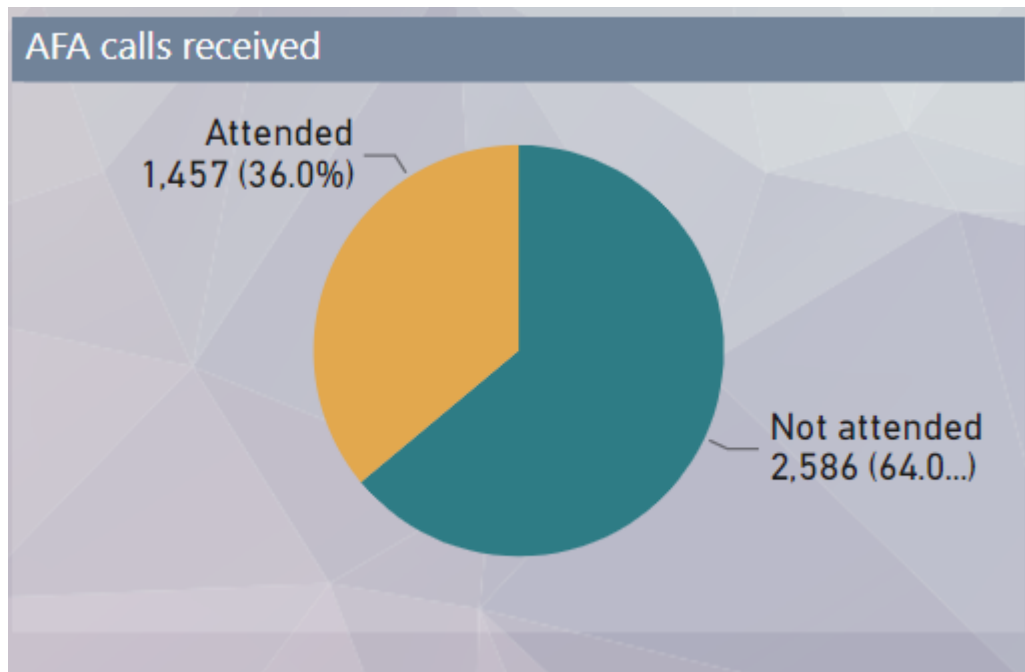
	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23
WMFS	1848	2104	2995	1518	2819
SFRS	549	549	695	436	605
Total	2397	2653	3690	1954	3424

1

3.5 Automated Fire Alarm Calls

Fire Control continue to be an integral function supporting the introduction of CRMP projects by ensuring a proportional level of response to incidents, including those involving Automated Fire Alarms.

A total of 4,043 calls were received relating to Automated Fire Alarms. Of those calls 1,457 were attended (36%) and 2,586 required no attendance (64%).



4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

The contact name for this report is Alex Shapland Strategic Enabler

Wayne Brown
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 APRIL 2023

**1. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT –
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1. THAT Members approve the Terms of Reference for the Training and Development Scrutiny Review, including the proposed timeline for the review and reporting.
- 1.2. THAT Members commit to participating in the member-led focus groups with staff to support the delivery of the review.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1. To provide members with a Terms of Reference (**Appendix A**) for the Scrutiny Review of Training Development, which was approved as the next option for Scrutiny at the 23 January 2023 meeting of the Committee.
- 2.2. To outline the member-led aspects of the review which will present members with an opportunity to hear directly from staff about their experiences.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. In January 2023, Scrutiny Committee chose Training and Development as the topic for their next formal review. Following this decisions officers have developed the terms of reference and methodology for the review in line with the agreed areas of focus approved by the Committee within that report.

- 3.2. Subsequent to this, the HMICFRS have published their Spotlight Report on Culture and Values in the Fire and Rescue Service. This report includes a number of specific recommendations for the sector around the training and development of staff, including how Services should take steps to improve inclusion and diversity, and provide greater focus on leadership development. As a result, these have been added to the Terms of Reference to ensure the Scrutiny Review remains relevant and can support the Service's wider response to the HMICFRS report.
- 3.3. In line with the Scrutiny Committee's own Terms of Reference, it is intended that the review will be member-led. While the initial data gathering, and case study development will take place ahead of the Authority AGM at which Scrutiny Members will be reappointed, the engagement with staff network groups and key stakeholders will be undertaken through face-to-face focus groups led by Scrutiny Committee members throughout August and September 2023.
- 3.4. It is intended that the final Scrutiny Report will be completed by October 2024. This will be followed 12-months later by a follow up report to determine what progress has been made on recommendations made.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 No initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this report as one is not required. However, the review itself will specifically consider the impact and experience of training and development for staff and new joiners with protected characteristics. Therefore, it is expected that the final review will report will make an assessment of equalities impacts.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications from this report, although it is expected that the report will consider the service's legal obligations with regards to skills, training and inclusion.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications of this proposal – the review will be undertaken by WMFS staff and WMFRA members.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no environmental impacts of this report.

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[HMICFRS Spotlight Report – Values and Culture in the Fire and Rescue Service](#)
[Scrutiny Committee Report – Scrutiny Review Options. 23 January 2023.](#)

The contact for this report is Sam Burton, Head of Development, and Inclusion - sam.burton@wmfs.net

Wayne Brown
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Appendix A

Scrutiny Review - Training and Development

Terms of Reference 2023

Background

A scrutiny Review to focus on the inclusivity and effectiveness of the Service's Training and Development functions. It will seek to determine whether the Training and Development processes support the service's aim of having a service that is fully representative of the community that we serve. Members will scrutinise WMFS policies, procedures, and ways of working which support the continual career development and talent identification and management of all staff.

Specific aims of the Review

- Establish if the training and development approach taken by West Midlands Fire Service achieves the needs of the Service, in particular groups that are underrepresented in leadership roles.
- Identify the role of innovation and technology to enable approaches to training and development in improving effectiveness, efficiency and accessibility for all staff with particular attention to Neurodiversity.
- Actions to ensure inclusiveness and equality in how training is developed and delivered for all staff, especially those from groups which are currently underrepresented within the service.
- Staff and specifically recruit experiences of training and development – what works well, and where further improvement could be made.

It is also hoped that the Review can help establish how WMFS is delivering or going to deliver against Recommendations 26, 32 and 33 of the recently published [HMICFRS Spotlight Report on Culture and Values](#):

- “By 1 October 2023, as a precursor to the development of the College of Fire and Rescue, chief fire officers and the National Fire Chiefs Council should work with the Home Office to consider how they can improve the training and support they offer to staff in management and leadership development. This should include authority members in respect of their assurance leadership roles and should ensure that opportunities are offered fairly across all staff groups.”
- “By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should, as a priority, specify in succession plans how they intend to improve diversity across all levels of the service. This should include offering increased direct-entry opportunities.”
- “By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should develop plans to promote progression paths for existing staff in non-operational roles and put plans in place to reduce any inequalities of opportunity.”

Planned Outcomes of the Review

- Make recommendations for improvement to the Service's training and development programme to ensure maximum effectiveness and enables competence of staff aligned to the Competency Risk Assessment (CRA).
- Make recommendations as to how the Service can provide a fair and clear career development pathway for all staff.
- Explore how digital systems can support individuals to develop and progress through a clear development pathway and make recommendations as to how those digital systems can be suitable across all neurodiverse groups.
- Seek to learn lessons from existing good practice both within the service and from partners

Methodology

- Engage with staff and stakeholder groups across the Service through surveys and bespoke, member-led workshops or through existing structures and/or committees to determine their experiences of WMFS training and development pathways.
- Review internal data and intelligence regarding current training and development outcomes.
- Engage with other organisations (both fire and externally) on their approaches to career development to provide benchmarking information and potential good practice.

Timescale

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| • Terms of Reference Agreed by Scrutiny Committee | – April 2023 |
| • Surveys and data gathering | – May-July 2023 |
| • Update report to Scrutiny Committee | – July 2023 |
| • Member-led evidence sessions | – Aug-Sept 2023 |
| • Presentation of final report | – Oct 2023 |
| • One year feedback report | – Oct 2024 |

Next Steps

- Agree Terms of Reference
- Agree Members of the Scrutiny Committee for the working group
- Approve methodology and timescales
- Begin Data gathering

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 April 2023

1. **Scrutiny Review of Safe & Well (SAW)**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Committee considers the progress against the learning recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Safe and Well.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1 For the Committee to receive an update on progress of the delivery of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Safe & Well that was completed in the Spring / Summer of 2022.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At Scrutiny Committee on 7th November 2022, the final report with the findings and recommendations from the review was presented for the Committee to consider and approve.
- 3.2 This report brings to Committee the progress of the implementation of the recommendations.
- 3.3 The outcomes agreed at Committee on 23rd May 2022 of the review are to evidence that the Prevention objectives in The Plan are being met because: -
- The service provides the right resources at the right time and in the right place
 - The service is using an evidence-based approach to the delivery of Safe and Well

- There are appropriate resources and support available for those delivering prevention activities
- The service is targeting its work with partners to keep the most vulnerable people in our communities safe from the emergencies to which we respond.

To determine and identify: -

- What additional support and resources the workforce would benefit from to enable them to deliver SAW effectively and efficiently.
- How the delivery of Safe and Well has been affected by the pandemic (working with partners) and the plan for recovery.
- The difference Safe and Well visits make to the safety of our communities.

To achieve the agreed outcomes, the review focused on four key areas, these were:-

1. risk stratification including referrals and relationships with partners,
2. record keeping,
3. delivery including training and development,
4. performance management, quality assurance and evaluation.

4. KEY LEARNING FROM THE REVIEW AND PROGRESS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The action plan for the implementation of the recommendations can be found a link in 'the background' section of this report along with the report presented at Scrutiny Committee on 7th November 2022 containing the learning from the review.

The learning from the review generated 10 recommendations which are below along with a progress update for each:-

4.1 Recommendation 1

Continue to develop and implement the Tymly system and supporting automated business processes which already includes the following functionality:-

- Improvement of administration, communications, and onward referral tasks through automated processes
- Prioritises appointments for those most at risk
- Triage lower risk to proportionate interventions
- Broadens the data collection to include all risk and vulnerability
- Eliminates the need for paper records
- Records risk and vulnerability at an individual and household level
- Multiple search options including name and DOB
- Mandatory answer requirements for key questions
- Information buttons embedded in the record that provide guidance and support conversations about risk and vulnerability
- Triage CNO case referrals
- Introduces revisit scheduling based on risk remaining after SAW
- Supports two-way referral processes into and from SAW
- Self-service for referring partners to obtain feedback on their referrals compliant with GDPR and enables 'sharing ownership of risk'
- Performance management is based on the work done to reduce risk and vulnerability i.e., the impact of the SAW

Progress Update

- The Prevention Team are working with a specialist ICT consultancy to develop the new system. The scoping, product based planning and benefits realisation work has been completed and the next stage is to create the workstream proposal.
- The creation of the workstream proposal will identify the budget and timescales needed to complete the work
- Some work was completed on Tymly before the COVID-19 pandemic and was piloted. There is a version of SAW that is ready to go live that can be used for proactive visits – visits that are not because of a referral. This will be launched during quarter one of this financial year.
- Tymly for CNO cases will go live at the end of April / start of May as soon as the CNOs have received their training scheduled for mid / end April.

4.2 **Recommendation 2**

Continue to review, improve, update, and raise awareness of the guidance, and support available on MESH. This should include: -

- Quality assurance and evaluation
- Good practice for information sharing
- Purpose and use of the Organisational Performance PowerBi dashboard for SAW
- Links to relevant organisational policies.

Progress Update

- The quality assurance and evaluation MESH page is in draft format and will go live end April / Early May
- The good practice guide for information sharing is live on MESH
- Relevant policies e.g., Safeguarding have links from the SAW MESH pages
and
- The video guidance to support the use of the Organisational Performance PowerBi dashboard has been reviewed and updated as appropriate, again this is available on MESH

4.3 **Recommendation 3**

Identify, develop, and implement solutions to address the training gaps identified in paragraph 4.3 detailed below: -

- Record keeping
- Softer skills for communicating in a 'person centred' way risk stratification and links between fire and health inequality
- Need for further support / training to be able to signpost for further support

Consideration should be given to the role that development plans for trainee firefighters, firefighters, supervisory and middle managers has within this.

Progress Update

- The implementation of the NFCC Person Centred Framework (PCF) will include training resources for communication, risk stratification linking fire and health inequality and requirements for data collection.
- The Tymly development will also be aligned to the PCF and where necessary answering questions will be mandatory
- In the meantime, the SAW delivery pages on MESH have been reviewed and updated to provide additional information and support.

4.4 **Recommendation 4**

Explore the option to quality assure SAW delivery alongside the current quality assurance of records through 'observed practice' in the form of 'standardised assessments'.

Update on Progress

Implementation of standardised assessments requires a 'standard' or 'standards' against which to assess. The introduction of the NFCC Person Centred Framework for Home Fire Safety Visits will provide these standards in the form of standard data collection requirements, and a competency framework including skills, knowledge and behaviours required to deliver an assessment. The Prevention Team are fully engaged and participating in the development of this framework.

4.5 **Recommendation 5**

Continue with the implementation of remote SAW (RSAW) as a means of providing SAW to those who are identified as low risk at the point of referral. Ensure that there is a clear escalation process to SAW where risk identified at RSAW requires this.

Progress Update

The tasks to implement this recommendation are complete. RSAW was launched on 27th February 2023 as a means of triaging a response to referrals that are lower risk. Clear criteria for face to face visits has been established and has

been revised considering feedback to ensure that we continue to provide face to face visits for those who are most at risk and vulnerable. The guidance is also clear about the option for our operational crews to use their professional knowledge to dynamically assess the risk in the referrals / RSAW and escalate to face to face at any point. The criteria continues to be reviewed. A comprehensive set of guidance and resources has been created and is available on MESH.

4.6 **Recommendation 6**

To enhance risk stratification and opportunities to improve delivery, explore and implement opportunities for raising awareness of the learning from: -

- Serious incident reviews (SIRs) to increase awareness of those in our communities who are overrepresented, and therefore at risk of being a serious or fatal casualty in an accidental dwelling fire.
- Station Prevention Evaluation sessions (SPEs)

Consideration should be given to the use of Organisational Intelligence debriefs and the role that the prevention teams, and operational middle and supervisory managers have for this.

Progress Update

The Command Station Commander Prevention Leads have met to discuss the findings from SPEs and to agree how they will address the findings to ensure that performance is high.

It has been established that the new Organisational Intelligence briefing process will be appropriate to share learning and feedback from SIRs and SPEs. We are now waiting for confirmation that the new Organisational Intelligence briefing process has been launched so that we can improve the way we raise awareness of the learning from both processes

4.7 **Recommendation 7**

The organisation has an independent internal Service Peer Assessment process (SPA). The purpose of which is to

enable feedback, check understanding and application of processes and policy. Consider how this process can evidence:-

- Levels of understanding and application of current processes and policy
- Improvement in understanding and application of new systems and processes as the recommendations from this review are implemented.

Progress Update

The tasks to implement this recommendation are complete. The SPA content has been agreed between Prevention and the SPA team and will be implemented during the first quarter of 2023/24

The SAW related content for SPA includes: -

- Prioritisation based on risk
- Criteria for referral to a CNO
- Feedback following the implementation of RSAW

4.8 Recommendation 8

To support the recent changes in SAW priorities, consider the benefits of the creation and publication of good practice guidance for operational middle and supervisory managers, to support them to monitor and manage performance and quality assurance. This should include consideration of the benefits of the introduction of buddy schemes and champions to support delivery.

Progress Update

As with the implementation of recommendation 4. The introduction of the NFCC Person Centred Framework for Home Fire Safety Visits will provide the framework with which to create the good practice guides and the development plans. In the meantime, comprehensive guidance is available to operational personnel at all levels to support them in the delivery and performance management of the current SAW.

A draft terms of reference for a SAW Champion has been created and will be shared with Operations Commanders for discussion and for decision making as to whether we should continue to develop this concept.

4.9 **Recommendation 9**

To support the provision of a consistent and national approach to SAW and continue to implement the 8 core components of the NFCC Person Centred Framework (PCF) for Home Fire Safety Visits including the: -

- Standardised data set
- Training package
- Evaluation framework

Where eLearn is the learning tool, consider how this can facilitate shared group rather than individual input to enhance understanding and knowledge.

Progress Update

The NFCC are progressing the development of the PCF at a steady pace. There are drafts of the:-

- Standard data collection requirements
- Competency Framework (skills, knowledge and behaviours)
- Evaluation Framework

Fire and rescue services are still waiting for the training package, although one short video focusing on softer skills has been published. WMFS has made the video available to our workforce and has information on MESH about the 'core components' of the PCF and how to use these to address risk and vulnerability whilst we await further updates from the NFCC. WMFS is fully engaged with and participating in the development of the PCF. The service is committed to implementing it.

4.10 **Recommendation 10**

Continue to develop the SAW Membership arrangements and onboard partners who work with service users that the CRMP identifies as being at risk and vulnerable to fire in order to: -

- Improve performance management of referral pathways through the provision of resources for partners to identify risk and refer to WMFS for SAW
- Enhance data sharing arrangements with SAW partners in line with GDPR
- Enable sharing of risk for services users with referring partners
- Create opportunity for 2 way referrals into SAW and from SAW for ongoing support
- Enable feedback and data sharing between partners to evidence the impact that SAW has on reducing risk and vulnerability to fire and improving health, wellbeing and quality of life
- Improve partner engagement in the Serious Incident Review process and the implementation of the learning that results.

Progress Update

The membership arrangements are being reviewed aligned to the development of Tymly and the NFCC PCF for Home Fire Safety Visits.

Working with partners to sign them up to the membership arrangements is a standard part of the work of the Prevention Partnerships & Vulnerability Team in their engagement with our SAW referral partners

To date seven key partners, including social care, health, Telecare, and housing providers have signed up to arrangements. Two partners (one health and one Telecare) are in the process of agreeing to the arrangements

5. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment not required and has not been carried out. The matters

contained in this report do not currently relate to a policy change. Initial Equality Impact Assessment(s) will be completed for changes to policy, process or practice resulting from the implementation of the recommendations from the review.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no known legal implications arising from this report.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Links below to:-

- Report to Scrutiny Committee on 7th November
- Learning Action Plan



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Scrutiny%20Review%20of%20SAW%20L

The contact name for this report is Head of Prevention – Pete Wilson telephone number 07973 810 262

Wayne Brown
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 APRIL 2023

1. **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT**

Report of the Chair of Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1. THAT Members approve the Draft 2022-23 Scrutiny Committee Annual Report.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1. To provide the Draft 2022-23 Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for member comment and approval.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. The Scrutiny Committee is required by its terms of reference to provide an Annual Report covering the key achievements and work of the Committee throughout the year. This report is submitted to the Fire Authority for approval.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1. No initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as this report does not involve a change in policy.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- [Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference – WMFRA Constitution Article 9](#)
- [Scrutiny Review of Safe and Well](#)
- [Scrutiny Review of Business Continuity Arrangements](#)

The contact for this report is Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority,
tom.embury@wmfs.net

Councillor Sybil Spence
CHAIR, SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE

**Annual Report of the
Scrutiny Committee
2022/23**

1. Background

In line with expectations set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework the Authority has established a Scrutiny Committee to support it in achieving its strategic objectives. The committee ensures that its policy and budgetary framework is followed and developed to reflect the changing needs and demands in meeting its statutory obligations.

Effective scrutiny frameworks will be in place for both the scrutiny of strategic policy, as well as performance. Aligned to the role of the Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer (CFO) as set out within the Constitution of the Authority, the scrutiny function should scrutinise decisions made or to be made, on the basis of 'public safety' aligned to the following definitions:

- "Pre scrutiny" enables changes proposed to strategic policy decisions to be scrutinised. These are decisions which if implemented, would change the strategic priorities and outcomes agreed by the Fire Authority (for example, matters contained in Authority 'forward plan' for approval). Pre scrutiny can:
 - i) Inform policy development and/or
 - ii) Hold the Authority to account
- "Post scrutiny" enables the Fire Authority to seek assurance around operational decisions already made by the CFO and other officers in the delivery of strategic priorities and outcomes (for example: training, partnership working). Post scrutiny can:
 - i) Scrutinise performance of specific issues and/or
 - ii) Hold officers to account

The key benefits of the Committee can be seen as:

- Complementing the strategic and policy formulation and development work of the Authority and Service.
- Developing the skills of Members to enable them to investigate below the surface of policies, strategies and processes.
- Providing a useful oversight and an element of 'challenge' to performance improvement processes and continuous improvement.
- Encouraging public involvement in the policy process.

- Supporting the development of an environment that stimulates a more reflective, evaluative, and evidence-based culture within the Authority and Service.

The Terms of Reference for the Committee can be found within Article 9 of the Authority Constitution, published on the [Authority website](#).

2. Meetings

During 2022/23, the Committee met on the following dates:

- 7 November 2022
- 23 January 2023
- 24 April 2023

3. Members & Attendance Record

	07/11/22	23/01/23	24/04/23
Councillor Atwal	✓	✓	
Councillor Barrie	✓	✓	
Councillor Dehar	✓	✓	
Councillor Hussain	✓	✓	
Councillor Spence	✓	✓	
Councillor Waters	✓	✓	
Councillor Young	✓	X	
S Middleton (co-optee)	✓	✓	

Officers from the Authority are also present at meetings as appropriate.

Working Groups are also appointed to consider scrutiny reviews. As of February 2023, the limit on the number of Scrutiny Reviews per year has been removed, giving the Committee flexibility to undertake as many reviews as is necessary but also feasible.

4. Business

During 2022/23 the Committee conducted the following business:

- Diversity, Inclusion Cohesion and Equality Updates.
- Dispute Resolution Monitoring.
- Fire Control Performance Reports.
- Scrutiny Review of Safe and Well and including receipt of recommendations.
- Scrutiny review of proposed changes to Business Continuity Arrangements resulting in recommend full Authority to maintain current approach.
- Commissioning of Scrutiny Review into Training and Development starting April 2023 for completion in the 2023/24 municipal year.
- Work programme selection.

5. The Committee's main achievements

The Committee's key achievements during the year include:

- The consideration of performance related information throughout the year, enabling the continued robust monitoring of the Service's performance in the areas of:
 - Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality,
 - Workforce profile indicators,
 - Dispute Resolution, Discipline and Grievance,
 - Operational performance of Fire Control.
- The Committee undertook a comprehensive review of the Service's Safe and Well provision, featuring a service wide survey and a number of focused interactive workshops with staff. The review reported to the Committee in November 2022 and identified opportunities for learning across a number of areas including:

- Risk Stratification
- Record Keeping
- Training and Development
- Performance Management
- Culture and Equity

The report also made ten recommendations for improvement and change, and the committee received an update on progress against those recommendations at its April 2023 meeting.

- In November 2022, the Committee considered two proposals for changes to the Service's approach to Business Continuity. This review was commissioned by the Full Authority. The review heard oral evidence from officers, representative bodies and the NFCC National Resilience Assurance Team. The committee concluded that the Authority should maintain its current approach to Business Continuity.
- In January 2023 the Committee commissioned the next scrutiny review, to consider the topic of training and development within the service, and in particular the experience of under-represented groups. A Terms of Reference for this review was agreed by the committee in April 2023. This will feature staff consultation, member-led focus groups with key staff groups and data analysis from both within the service and from other services. It is intended that the review will report in October 2023.

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 APRIL 2023

1. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Report of the Clerk to the Authority

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1. THAT Members approve the proposed changes to the Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference (summarised in **Appendix A**) to be submitted to Fire Authority for approval.
- 1.2. THAT Members consider any further changes or additions to the Terms of Reference which could support the Committee to undertake its role of support the Authority to achieve its strategic objectives.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To review and update as required the Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference, a process undertaken annually as part of a wider review of the Authority Constitution.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. The Scrutiny Committee, like all Authority Committees, is required to regularly review its Terms of Reference to ensure they remain relevant.
- 3.2. Minor changes were made as a result of a focused review of the Constitution undertaken in February 2023. These changes are highlighted in blue text within the Terms of Reference in **Appendix A**.
- 3.3. Further changes are suggested in red text with the intention of further increasing the clarity and readability of the Terms of Reference.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 No initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as none of the proposed changes will impact on the equalities aspects of the Scrutiny Committee's role.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications of this report.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications of this report.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications of this report.

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[WMFRA Constitution](#)

The contact for this report is Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority

Karen Gowreesunker
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

Appendix A

Article 9 - Scrutiny Committee

- 9.1 In line with expectations set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework, the Authority has established a Scrutiny Committee to support it in achieving its strategic objectives. The committee ensures that its policy and budgetary framework is followed and developed to reflect the changing needs and demands in meeting its statutory obligations.
- 9.2 Effective scrutiny frameworks will be in place for both the scrutiny of strategic policy, as well as performance. Aligned to the role of the Fire Authority and **Chief Fire Officer** as set out in articles 4 and 5 of this constitution, the scrutiny function should scrutinise decisions made or to be made, on the basis of 'public safety', aligned to the following definitions:

Pre scrutiny enables changes proposed to strategic policy **decisions** to be scrutinised. These are decisions which if implemented, would change the strategic priorities and outcomes agreed by the Fire Authority (for example, matters contained in **the** Authority 'Forward Plan' for approval). Pre scrutiny can:

- i. Inform policy development and/or
- ii. Hold the Authority to account

Post scrutiny enables the Fire Authority to seek assurance around operational decisions already made by the **Chief Fire Officer** and other officers in the delivery of strategic priorities and outcomes (for example: training, partnership working). Post scrutiny can:

- i. Scrutinise performance of specific issues and/or
- ii. Hold officers to account

9.3 Role and Functions: -

- To carry out scrutiny reviews selected by the Committee, with appropriate consideration of committee and officer capacity and cost. Such reviews will be member-led, and evidence based, and will produce SMART (specific, measurable, **achievable attainable**, **relevant realistic** and timely) recommendations to the Authority.
- To track and monitor the implementation of review recommendations that are accepted by the Authority.
- To summon any officer or member of the Authority to give account in respect of reviews or any other relevant matter.
- To manage, in consultation with the **Section 151 Officer Strategic-Enabler for Finance and Resources**, a specific budget for the purpose of buying in any necessary external advice and support in connection with the reviews.

- To receive and scrutinise performance information including progress against the Community Risk Management Plan and 'The Plan', ~~the~~ objectives and priorities, and corporate performance indicators and review performance targets.
 - To review and scrutinise strategic performance information of ~~the Shared Staffordshire and West Midlands~~ Fire Control on a ~~twice-yearly biannual~~ basis.
 - To have responsibility for scrutiny of Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality ~~and diversity~~ throughout the West Midlands Fire Service and to review policies and monitor performance in relation thereto.
 - To monitor and scrutinise as appropriate the Authority's HR policies.
 - To monitor and scrutinise sickness levels, promotion policies and employee exit information.
 - To receive information and statistics on grievance monitoring and to report outcomes to the Joint Consultative Panel.
 - To ~~scrutinise whether the ensure that the~~ Authority is meeting its duties under Health & Safety, ~~and~~ Environmental and other relevant legislation.
 - To deal with any matters referred to it by the full Authority ~~or its committees the Policy Planning Forum~~, the Chief Fire Officer, Clerk, Monitoring Officer or Treasurer, not within its work programme.
 - To refer any matter for consideration by the Authority, another Committee or an officer where considered appropriate.
 - To submit its minutes and an Annual Report to the Authority.
- 9.4 In order to allow for separation of the Scrutiny and decision-making functions, findings and recommendations of Scrutiny reviews will be presented to the Authority by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee. Members (excluding substitutes) of the Scrutiny Committee shall not vote on matters arising from Scrutiny reviews.
- 9.5 The Committee will sit in public with minimum exceptions.
- 9.6 In addition to its programmed meetings, the Committee will hold additional meetings, as and when required, in order to efficiently manage its workload.

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**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23**

Date of Meeting	Item	Responsible Officer	Completed
2022			
7 November 2022	Dispute Resolution Report – 1 st January 2022-30 June 2022	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	7 November 2022
	Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality Update	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	7 November 2022
	Review of Safe and Wells	Strategic Lead – Prevention	7 November 2022
	Business Cont. Review	Clerk to the Authority	7 November 2022
	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler	7 November 2022
	Consideration of Scrutiny Committee Work Programme	Clerk to the Authority / Chair of Scrutiny Committee	7 November 2022
2023			
Date of Meeting	Item	Responsible Officer	Completed
23 January 2023	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	23 January 2023

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	Dispute Resolution Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler – People	23 January 2023
	Business Continuity – Verbal Update	ACFO – Strategic Enabler – People	23 January 2023
	Scrutiny Review – Options	Deputy Clerk	23 January 2023
	Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2022-23	Democratic Services Officer	23 January 2023
24 April 2023	Dispute Resolution Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	Deferred to July 2023
	Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality Update	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	Deferred to July 2023
	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler – People	24 April 2023
	Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee	Chair of Scrutiny Committee	24 April 2023
	Business Continuity Update – TBC	TBC	N/A
	Scrutiny Review – Training and Career Development	ACFO Strategic Enabler – People	24 April 2023
	Update on Safe and Well – Scrutiny Review	Strategic Lead – Prevention	24 April 2023
	Scrutiny Committee – Terms of Reference	Democratic Services Officer	24 April 2023
	Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2022-23	Democratic Services Officer	24 April 2023

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October 2022

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17 July 2023 (TBC)	Scrutiny Review – Training and Career Development	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Dispute Resolution Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler – People	
	Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality Update	ACFO Strategic Enabler – People	
	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO – Strategic Enabler – People	
	Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2023-24	Democratic Services Officer	

To report as appropriate:

- Updates on reviews

Note: separate meetings of any review working group are to be scheduled if and when required.

