

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

14 DECEMBER 2015

1. **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIPS**

Report of the Clerk to the Authority

RECOMMENDED

THAT the proposals contained within the Scrutiny Committee's Review of Partnerships report are approved.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is provided to seek approval from Executive Committee for the approval of proposals arising from the Scrutiny Committee to review the Service's partnership arrangements. The full report is attached as Appendix 1. For ease of reference the proposals are also set out in Appendix 2.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The terms of reference for Scrutiny Committee, as detailed within the constitution, requires Scrutiny Committee to undertake a minimum of two reviews per year.
- 3.2 In March 2015 Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of all aspects of partnerships activity. In enabling this, a Scrutiny Members working group comprising of Councillors Tranter, Hogarth and Spence was established. The review process was facilitated by officers from the Strategic Hub.
- 3.3 In leading the review, the Members working group has been engaged throughout and has:-

- met all Partnership Officers.
- met a cross section of Community Risk Reduction Officers.
- met regularly with the (then) Community Safety Manager.
- spoken to a limited number of station personnel.
- participated in a home safety check.

3.4 As is common with all reviews, a number of opportunities for improvement have been identified. However, whilst responding to such opportunities will be necessary to secure continuous improvement and value for money, it is perhaps more appropriate at this time to fundamentally re-think what the Service requires of its partnerships systems, structures and functionality. The scope of the review, quite rightly, looked at the 'as is' in terms of our accepted thinking regarding what Fire Service partnerships have traditionally delivered – generally working with a range of multi-agency partners to deliver improved outcomes and support the delivery of The Plan in 'making West Midlands safer'.

3.5 However, due to the changing political and funding landscape, commissioning (bidding to supply services) has emerged as a viable means of contributing towards balancing our budget. Whilst at the same time improving the lives of the most vulnerable, by providing services that have traditionally been provided by public health agencies. Therefore, the Service must re-consider its current approach to identifying and supporting partnerships and focus upon the structure, processes and resources required to maximise and sustain a commissioning model. The need for sustainable organisational commissioning expertise will be of primary consideration in developing proposals for change as a result of this review.

3.6 The review has examined partnerships from a strategic perspective right through to the delivery of local partnership activity. As a consequence of this, proposals have been submitted to enable for:-

- consideration and confirmation of the Leadership Team in Community Safety and the role of this team in reinforcing and enabling the delivery of partnerships.
- the appropriate role and structure of the Headquarters Community Safety team to be developed in line with the organisation's commissioning ambitions.
- the establishment of effective governance arrangements both locally and centrally to enable for assurance to be provided that partnerships are provided in line with expectations.
- the role of command partnerships resources to be considered in supporting a commissioned based approach.
- Evaluation-quantifying and qualifying success methodologies to be developed.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The course of action recommended in this report does not raise issues which should be drawn to the attention of the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report. Additional resources will not be required to implement the proposals contained within the Partnerships Review report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Governance of the Authority 2012/13 Report, 25 June 2012
The Centre for Public Scrutiny Good Scrutiny Guide

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CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY