

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5 SEPTEMBER 2018

1. REVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING – PROGRESS UPDATE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Committee approves a Scrutiny working group to take the review of safeguarding forward, confirming its membership including nominating a lead member
- 1.2 THAT the Committee note the approach to the review
- 1.3 THAT the Committee approve the appointment of an external independent professional to support the review
- 1.4 THAT the Committee note the financial cost involved if an external independent professional is appointed

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 This report is submitted to allow the Committee to consider the establishment of a Scrutiny working group to take the review of safeguarding forward, to confirm its membership and to nominate a lead member to report back on behalf of the working group.
- 2.2 The Committee are asked to note the proposed approach to be taken to carrying out the review, in that the review will be member led supported by an external independent professional (if appointed) and supported by members of an internal working group (consisting of key stakeholders from across the Service).

- 2.3 The Committee are asked to consider and approve the appointment of an external independent professional who will be able to support and guide the review through to the production of an agreed set of outcomes.
- 2.4 Additionally, the Committee are asked to note the release of the necessary funding which the appointment of an external independent professional would incur (detailed within Financial Implications – section six of this report).
- 2.5 An overview of the review is provided within Appendix 1 including purpose, approach and intended outcomes, as well as progress to date in establishing approach, timescales and resources required.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 A Scrutiny Review of Safeguarding was proposed at the meeting of the Committee held on 4 June 2018 and a scoping document outlining the review and its intended outcomes was submitted for the consideration of Members (see background papers). Members of the Committee approved the review with a view to establishing a working group to take the review forward.
- 3.2 The reasons for a review to be carried out include but are not limited to:
 - Recent changes to legislation and statutory guidance.
 - The need for WMFS to address and implement a number of specific recommendations which have resulted from a multi-agency review following a Fire Safety Prohibition.
 - Evidence suggesting instances where either safeguarding concerns have not been identified and/or policy and procedure has not been applied.
- 3.3 The purpose of the review is to ensure that:
 - WMFS policy and procedures are compliant with legislation and statutory guidance, and address the learning from the Metro Court multi-agency review.

- The whole workforce has the necessary skills and knowledge to identify safeguarding concerns within the context of their role and apply the policy and procedures consistently and competently.
- The policy is owned by the most appropriate member of the Strategic Enabling Team so that safeguarding is seen as everyone's responsibility.
- Quality standards and monitoring processes are in place to ensure safeguarding concerns are identified and managed in accordance with WMFS policy.

3.4 The proposed approach to undertake the review includes:

- An external independent professional be appointed to work with the Scrutiny working group to conduct the review, analyse the information gathered and to write a report which includes their analysis and recommendations to achieve the intended outcomes (further details of the proposed role of the external independent professional is detailed with Appendix 1).
- An internal working group to be formed to support the Scrutiny working group. Membership of the internal working group will be comprised of key stakeholders from a variety of areas within the Service including Prevention, Protection, People Support Services, and Intelligence and Innovation.
- The internal working group will implement the recommendations of the review with peer support from the National Fire Chiefs Council National Safeguarding Group, West Midlands Metropolitan Emergency Services Safeguarding Adults Group, and local safeguarding children partners.

3.5 Further information on the review is contained within Appendix 1 which details:

- The purpose of the review
- Intended outcomes
- What informed the scope and intended outcomes
- Anticipated costs and benefits of the use of an external independent professional

- Timescales

- 3.6 It is anticipated that the review will take approximately three months from the time that the Scrutiny and internal working groups are secured. The initial findings of the review will be submitted to the Committee at the February 2019 meeting.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report, an initial Equality Impact Assessment is required and has been carried out. The initial Equality Impact Assessment did raise issues which will require a full Equality Impact Assessment to be carried out once the review has been completed and proposed changes have been agreed.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

The recommendations outlined in this report will assist the Service under its duties in the Care Act 2014.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Utilising an external independent professional to support, guide and implement the review and its outcomes will give rise to a financial cost.
- 6.2 Estimated costs based on work across all Service areas:
- £600 to £800 per day
 - Eight to ten days (dependent upon the format of the review and the number of personnel engaged)
 - Approximate total: £4,800 (eight days at £600 per day) to £8,000 (ten days at £800 per day)
- 6.3 In the event that the Committee approve the appointment of an external independent professional to support the review, Officers will liaise with the Treasurer to facilitate the request of funding to meet the financial costs.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scrutiny Review of Safeguarding (Scrutiny Committee 4 June 2018).

Scrutiny of Safeguarding – review scoping document (Scrutiny Committee 4 June 2018).

The contact name for this report is Gary Taylor (Assistant Chief Fire Officer) telephone number 0121 380 6006.

PHIL LOACH
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER