

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

13 FEBRUARY 2023

1. THREE YEAR ROLLING STRATEGY 2023-26 AND ANNUAL PLAN

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT Members note the ongoing progress and in year deliverables of the evidence-based Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) objectives, as set out in 3.3-3.8.5.
- 1.2 THAT Members reaffirm the Authority's Vision for the Authority's three-year rolling strategy, as set out in 3.13.2.
- 1.3 THAT Members approve the three-year strategic objectives 2023-26 and refresh of the annual plan priorities for delivery in 2023-24, as set out in 3.14.5.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 This report is submitted to Members to provide an overview of the progression of CRMP objectives and what we are committing to deliver within the third year of our planning cycle (as approved by Members in 2021).
- 2.2 The report will also set out the review of the Authority's Vision and Strategic objectives and annual priorities that set the context for the three-year rolling strategy.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)

- 3.1.1 On 14 February 2022, the Fire Authority approved the latest iteration of the three-year rolling strategy for 2022-25 and noted

the ongoing progress against the evidence based CRMP objectives first approved by the Authority in 2021. In 2023/24, the CRMP will be due for its three yearly refresh and will be subject to public consultation and work is already underway on this process.

- 3.1.2 The Service is required by the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework to ensure our CRMP covers “at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary”. We are also required to ensure that the CRMP “reflect[s] effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners” and is “easily accessible and publicly available”.
- 3.1.3 West Midlands Fire Service achieves these requirements by firstly reviewing and updating the CRMP as a risk analysis on an ongoing basis, but also undertaking a three yearly refresh which includes public consultation. The service publishes our rolling three yearly strategic plan – known as “Our Plan” – as a means of outlining how we will address the risks identified within the CRMP to the public. For members’ information, a copy of Our Plan can be accessed on the WMFS website here: <https://www.wmfs.net/our-plan/>.

The Service has eight Planning Principles that encompass our approach to CRMP. These are:

- to continue to evolve our delivery of risk-based services aligned to the needs of local communities.
- to create opportunities and make the best use of our resources to effectively manage changing risk.
- to sustain our delivery of risk-based services to local communities
- maintain and enhance our ‘outstanding’ response services.
- to enable sustainable and resilient services for now and the future
- maintain and expand our offer to partners and communities, delivering services which are in the communities’ interest.
- manage Health and Safety considerations within existing arrangements, ensuring safe systems of work.

- deliver the most effective CRMP working with our staff.

3.2 **CRMP Objectives**

3.2.1 In recognition of both the changing CRMP, the role of a fire and rescue service and government expectations; following a review of our CRMP undertaken throughout 2020 and a period of public consultation undertaken in late 2020, the Fire Authority approved the progression of the following 6 CRMP objectives:

- Risk Based Crewing
- Dynamic Mobilising
- Automatic Fire Alarms
- Blended Fleet
- Reducing Health Inequalities
- Emerging Risks

3.2.2 These CRMP projects continue to be delivered and will continue to be a priority in our annual plan. The focus of these CRMP projects continues to be transforming the services we deliver to our communities in a sustainable way and importantly, continuing to mitigate and reduce risk to vulnerability of fire and other emergency incidents.

3.3 **CRMP Objective Updates**

Risk-Based Crewing

3.3.1 Risk-Based Crewing (RBC) provides an alternative approach to managing risk and finance through our fleet, to ensure we are delivering value for money, whilst providing the best services to meet the diverse needs of our communities.

3.3.2 This CRMP objective focuses on lower risk incidents such as secondary fires or special service calls. Empowering fire control and operational officers to make risk-based decisions regarding the right level of resources to mobilise based on knowledge, experience and professional judgement. This approach builds on our already successful dynamic mobilising concept.

3.3.3 Following a successful trial period, RBC was rolled out to 11 core BRV stations from April 2022 as part of business-as-usual

operations. Staff have provided ongoing feedback to shape and inform the RBC concept throughout.

- 3.3.4 Evaluation of the project has seen a 60% increase in BRV availability.
- 3.3.5 A BRV has been mobilised with two personnel 32% of times and 84% of all secondary incidents have been attended by a BRV enabling a more proportionate response to incidents, aligned to risk.
- 3.3.6 During the extreme heat experienced last summer, RBC enabled us to flexibly use our resources and effectively manage the significant increase in demand and spare conditions. The concept has shown the benefits that risk-based crewing can have on managing risk within our communities.

Next steps/in year deliverables:

- 3.3.7 Following the success of the roll out of risk-based crewing across all of our core BRV stations, the next steps of this project will see us exploring further opportunities to develop RBC across our Service Delivery Model.
- 3.3.8 Over the next 12 months the Service will commit to delivering against the following.
- Further develop our approach to RBC across our Service Delivery Model.
 - The trial of a low-risk vehicle concept to further enhance RBC. This will be an additional vehicle at certain locations that will support a more proportionate response to low-risk incidents, whilst enhancing our capacity to deliver key prevention and protection activities to some of our most vulnerable communities.
 - Build on the recommendations of Dynamic Mobilising to explore innovative technology and equipment for our resources with reduced crewing to further support an assertive, effective and safe response at all incidents.
- 3.3.9 Although not the key driver for progressing this work, the savings generated from this approach can contribute towards in year efficiency requirements.

3.4 **Dynamic Mobilising**

- 3.4.1 The Dynamic Mobilising project has delivered research to support evidence-based decision making across all CRMP objectives, most notably Risk Based Crewing and Blended Fleet. The project has worked with a range of data sets, modelling, research, job cycles adopted by FRS as well as academic institutions and sector subject matter experts to assure the approach and findings.
- 3.4.2 This research has endeavoured to understand the factors which contribute to the level of risk that high-risk category 1 incidents present to:
- crews.
 - the public.
 - businesses.
 - the environment.
- 3.4.3 This has enabled us to understand how our initial level of response can be more effectively aligned to the actual/known risk of an incident at the point of call. The hope is that this will inform improved outcomes for these stakeholders as well as the role our attendance times play in determining people/resource requirements.
- 3.4.4 Initial data collection took place between December 2021 into early 2022 to provide the necessary information to undertake a correlation analysis of what factors may either increase or decrease the risk presented by a category 1 incident.
- 3.4.5 Fire safety modelling was completed in February–March 2022 using software that can predict smoke, temperature, carbon monoxide and other substances during fires in order to gather data on temperature and conditions within the fire compartment. Fire Control research was also undertaken during this time period.
- 3.4.6 Live burn scenarios took place in April 2022 to validate the computer modelling previously undertaken.

Next steps/in year deliverables

- 3.4.7 As outlined above, the Dynamic mobilising project has delivered against its original brief, to deliver research that will enable evidence-based decisions to be made across all incident types. This research proposed a number of recommendations that have been presented to our Strategic Enabling Team, from which the Service have committed to the following.

A review of Fire Control to include:

- exploring how we can enable Fire Control to gather further information during a call to support dynamic mobilising.
- understanding whether further questioning and information gathering (after mobilising the initial response) can support Dynamic Mobilising and support assertive, effective and safe firefighting.
- delivery of further fire behaviour training to Fire Control, empowering them to make critical mobilisation decisions when viewing 999 eye.

A review of how we collect data and measure response targets:

- Expanding on the data collected through post-incident workbooks to further develop organisational awareness and support the development of Economic and Social value of FRS activities.
- Understanding the benefits of placing performance indicators on the weight of attack element through attendance standards for supporting vehicles.

- 3.4.8 The above will support the Service in its aspiration to move from pre-defined levels of response, to embedding the principles of people-based mobilising through effective, evidence based dynamic mobilising decisions across all of our incident types. The goal being to ensure all of our incidents are resourced proportionality to the known risk posed to our communities and our firefighters.

3.5 **Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs)**

3.5.1 The AFA project seeks to review our dynamic mobilising approach to AFAs to ensure we only send a response when required. This in turn will allow our firefighters to be increasingly available to support with Community Risk Reduction (CRR) activities, reducing risk and harm in the community.

To date the AFA project has delivered:

- an amended approach to our response to AFA incidents at student accommodation. We will now not attend an AFA at these premises, unless there is a reason to attend.
- implementation of a more proportionate response to AFAs at hospitals, where possible, a PRL will not attend unless there are additional reasons. As part of this change, training has been provided to hospitals, as well as to Fire Control to support this introduction.

Since their introduction on 12th September 2022, we have seen a 25% reduction in the use of PRLs at AFAs, meaning these key resources have remained available for our highest risk incidents.

Next steps/in year deliverables

3.5.2 The final phase of this project will see a revised our approach to residential care homes, applying dynamic mobilising to all AFAs 24/7, maintaining the most proportionate Level of Response, minimising the impact on our core fleet.

3.5.3 As this project draws to a close, the focus of our next steps will be on evaluation. This will enable us to fully understand the impact amending our approach to the three specific building types has had ensuring we, and more importantly our communities, are seeing a measurable benefit.

3.6 **Blended Fleet**

3.6.1 This project aims to work across the CRMP and its objectives, to continuously explore the opportunities these present in transforming our use of resources and how these can be further enhanced, through adapting and changing our fleet and how it is used.

- 3.6.2 Critical to the future of our blended fleet is not only how it can adapt to changing approaches to the delivery of prevention, protection and response activities but also how external influencing factors such as innovation, sector research and environmental considerations will impact the type of vehicles required for the future.
- 3.6.3 As with all our CRMP objectives, the aim of blended fleet is to achieve risk reduction activities through prevention, protection and response in an assertive, effective and safe way, continuing to provide an outstanding 5-minute response to high-risk incidents.
- 3.6.4 The initial phase of this CRMP objective has sought to identify potential changes to the resourcing and use of the WMFS current fleet, to support the future implementation of AFAs, RBC and the review of attendance to Road Traffic Collisions (RTC).
- 3.6.5 Following stakeholder engagement and full consultation via the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) changes were made in relation to non-persons reported RTC incidents from 07/11/22. This involved the re-classification of non-person reported RTCs to further support flexibility of RBC in this incident type.
- 3.6.6 Since implementation, a BRV has been mobilised to 16.4% of RTC incidents, previously, this was 1%. This change further supports a proportionate response to low-risk incidents, to enable resources to remain available for category 1 incidents, as well as key prevention activities.
- 3.6.7 Another area of work delivered through Blended Fleet is to support the evolution of the BRV replacement programme. The team have gained feedback regarding the current fleet, to help inform future vehicle and equipment requirements.
- 3.6.8 The team, working with wider stakeholders, have developed Blended Fleet Principles to ensure the Blended Fleet project aligns and complements other CRMP projects, these include:
1. develop a fleet that supports people-based mobilising, facilitating a proportionate and flexible response to all incident types
 2. empowering our people, to select the most appropriate

resource for the type of risk reduction activity they are undertaking.

3. commitment to continually developing the fleet which enables us to play our part in protecting the environment.

Next steps/in year deliverables:

- 3.6.9 The Blended Fleet project will continue to support delivery across all of our CRMP priorities.

3.7 Reducing Health Inequalities

- 3.7.1 The CRMP and 3 year Rolling Strategy February 2021 Authority report, highlighted the link between health status of an individual and Fire and Rescue related risks such as fire and WMFS's targeted person-centred approach to its prevention interventions. Our Strategy continues to use the principle of 'upstream activity', identifying and tackling the causes of the causes of preventable death and related injury, which underpins our prevention activity.

- 3.7.2 The Reducing Health Inequalities objective aims to:

- enhance the 'Up Stream' approach to firefighting through the development of a co-ordinated suite of activities that reduce health inequalities across the life course of a vulnerable person
- reduce the risk and vulnerability to fire and other emergencies and create more resilient communities.

- 3.7.3 In January 2022, the renewed Prevention Policy was published which helped in the understanding of the role of Prevention and how, by delivering a more people centred and evidence-based approach to Prevention activities, we can better achieve the Prevention objectives set out within "Our Plan," which were identified through our CRMP process.

- 3.7.4 Digital Safe and Wells have also been launched, providing opportunity to more effectively expand and extend risk reduction activity.

- 3.7.5 One of the key objects for the Reducing Health Inequalities CRMP Project was to gain greater understanding on the impact

our Prevention work has on reducing vulnerability to fire within our communities.

3.7.6 During March 2022, surveys were sent to Safe and Well service users to help understand the effectiveness of the visits. The surveys demonstrate that safe and well visits do reduce risk and vulnerability to fire through behaviour and lifestyle changes. In doing so, they evidence that these changes are making a positive difference to people's health, wellbeing, and quality of life. For example:

- of those where there was a smoker in the household, 95% said that they had a greater understanding of the risks associated with smoking.
- 15% of the people who told us they had been referred to stop smoking services confirmed that they had stopped smoking.
- 26% told us they smoke more safely because of the visit
- 91% of those where falls risk was identified said that they had a greater understanding of the risks of falling
- of those who were not testing their smoke alarm, 100% of tenants were now testing their smoke alarm
- 70% reduction in chip pan usage

Next steps/in year deliverables:

3.7.7 We know that tackling those health inequalities that exist within our most vulnerable communities is a key to reducing risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies. We also know that the current cost of living crisis, longer-term consequences of COVID and impacts of climate change will only exacerbate those inequalities that already impact the most vulnerable.

3.7.8 For these reasons our focus will continue to be on delivering a co-ordinated suite of activities that aim to reduce health inequalities across the life course of a vulnerable person and enhancing our 'up stream' approach to firefighting.

3.7.9 Over the next 12 months the Service will commit to develop and implement the following:

- brief interventions for Winter warmth, Smoking and Falls Prevention

- proactive contact strategy and protocols
- social prescribing offer for health partner organisations
- clear “Health” offer for partner organisations
- the complete roll out of Tymly for Prevention activities.

3.8 **Emerging Risks**

- 3.8.1 The Emerging Risks CRMP objective recognised the future impact of external and environmental changes and events which will impact on how we deliver our services as well as the skills required of our people to achieve this to ensure continued preparedness.
- 3.8.2 As of 1st May 2022, the third Technical Rescue Station located at Sutton Coldfield was opened. Recruitment took place for officers outside of TRU as well as external firefighters from other services to increase diversity within the unit.
- 3.8.3 To date TRU have recruited 28 new staff, increasing the diversity within the unit. TRU has seen a 100% increase in those from BAME backgrounds, 200% increase in females and will continue to promote diversity. As well as an increase in diversity, TRU have successfully recruited five external applicants who all bring diverse skill sets and ways of thinking.
- 3.8.4 In addition to the third TRU station, the Prevent Strategy was a key element of the Emerging Risk project. West Midlands Police Counter Terrorism Unit (WMP CTU) and the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) have developed training sessions for WMFS staff that will enable uniformed and non-uniformed staff to recognise and refer concerns related to extremism - under the remit of safeguarding.
- 3.8.5 The sessions are localised to highlight current trends and ensure the training is relevant and appropriate for all staff. The training commenced in January 2023 and will conclude in February 2023.
- 3.8.6 Alongside West Midlands Police, WMFS also attend the local Prevent Delivery Group and Prevent Regional meetings to promote our training proposal, seek best practise and to work with local authorities around the Prevent theme.

Next steps/in year deliverables

- 3.8.7 We continue to horizon scan to identify those new and emerging risks that may have an impact on the risk landscape of our communities and the services we provide. As outlined above, our risk analysis from 2020 saw us focusing on the impacts of external and environmental changes such as the impacts of climate change in the types of incident we attend, the development of the built environment and the growing threat of marauding terrorist incidents. This led us to the opening of a third technical rescue station at Sutton Coldfield to increase our resilience to these, types of scenarios.
- 3.8.8 As this project comes to a close, the focus will turn to evaluating the impact, but also to identifying the next range of emerging risks that may impact on the delivery of our service.

3.9 Developing CRMP Themes

- 3.9.1 As stated earlier, our CRMP is due its three yearly refresh and work has already started on understanding those emerging themes that will shape our strategy moving forwards. This analysis has identified the following themes.
- Business Continuity and Resilience – an increase in disruptive events such as protests, international disputes, social disruption, supply chain issues, loss of utilities, climate change, cyber-attacks.
 - Emerging Technologies – the drive for sustainability to negate climate change is creating emerging technologies such as Lithium-Ion Batteries, hydrogen, Large Energy Storage Systems and new building construction methodologies in the built environment.
 - Cost of Living – vulnerability is going to continue to rise with the impact of the cost of living, leading to increased community risk and frequency and severity of incidents. Exasperating underlying social inequalities that we know increase our communities risk to fire and other emergencies.

- Sustainability and Net Zero - WMFS recognises that not only do our activities impact on the environment but changes in the environment may impact on our operational response. Sustainability not solely focused on the environment but is a service wider eco system where opportunities are founded by working together, streamlining processes and ways of working leading to a more effective and efficient service. As role models within our communities and to meet external targets, we see sustainability becoming an overarching theme across all elements of our Strategy, enabling all areas of the services to adapt or adopt new approaches to safer communities.

These themes will form the bases of future CRMP proposals and are likely to feature within our public consultation.

3.10 **Strategic Influences**

In the progression of the CRMP, it has been critical to understand the potential impact of external influences. Some of the key influences are summarised below.

3.10.1 **Fire Reform White Paper**

In May 2022 the Government published their long-awaited fire reform white paper, setting out proposals to introduce reform in three areas; People, Professionalism and Governance. The consultation process for the white paper ran from May to July 2022 and both WMFS senior officers and WMFRA provided responses. The Government is yet to respond.

Key proposals include the implementation of operational independence and corporation sole for chief fire officers on a statutory basis, the creation of a College of Fire to drive professional standards and changes to the National Joint Council apparatus used to negotiate pay and conditions. WMFS continues to monitor these reform proposals and understand their potential impact on the CRMP and our service provision.

3.10.2 **UK Government Resilience Framework**

The UK Government Resilience Framework – previously commonly referred to as the resilience strategy – was published

in December 2022. This sets out the Government's proposals to strengthen the country's resilience systems and capabilities. This includes proposals in a number of areas both directly and indirectly impacting on the working of WMFS and the delivery of our CRMP.

This includes areas such as reform and strengthening of Local Resilience Forums, the development of a Resilience Academy and a national resilience function and driving greater resilience standards in the private sector. Many of the targets included within the Framework commit the government to action by 2025, with all aspects delivered by 2030.

3.10.3 Manchester Arena Inquiry, Grenfell Tower Inquiry and London Fire Brigade Cultural Review

All three of these reviews/inquiries have been closely analysed by the service with a view to learning lessons and implementing relevant recommendations. Further recommendations are expected from phase two of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry later in 2023 and a similar approach will be taken to evaluate and implement such recommendations as apply to WMFS or could help improve our policies and processes.

The learning from the Manchester Arena Inquiry will continue to influence our approach to collaboration with our blue light partners and neighbouring emergency services. Nationally led learning on areas such as JESIP will be considered and integrated into our approach as necessary. The London Fire Brigade Cultural Review will be analysed by the service to provide assurance. Our Values are enabling us to effectively achieve our vision and deliver our strategy in an environment that allows everyone to thrive.

3.10.4 Building Safety Act 2022

The Building Safety Act entered into law between April and October 2022, introducing a raft of new requirements not only for WMFS but for Responsible Persons, Local Authorities, developers and the newly created Building Safety Regulator. The Act aims to address a number of the issues highlighted within the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and subsequent reviews of the safety of high-rise residential properties. The Act introduces a

range of new processes and intervention points in the approval and construction of high-rise residential buildings (seven stories or over 18m). WMFS fire safety expertise will be required to support these new requirements.

3.11 **Single Year Settlement, Value for Money and Productivity**

- 3.11.1 As with previous years, the provision of a one-year financial settlement for 2023-24 does not enable the effective long term planning and delivery of a multi-year rolling strategy. The Authority's three-year rolling strategy and CRMP require both investment and efficiencies to be made over the short and medium term, but this is limited by central government's current approach to local government financing.
- 3.11.2 Our CRMP is central to meeting our requirements to deliver value for money. The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework sets out a clear requirement under section 5 for fire and rescue authorities to achieve value for money by managing their budgets and ensuring the efficient and effective use of their resources. This includes regular review of the numbers and deployment of firefighters and other staff, as well as our procurement of goods and services and commitment to national and local transformation programmes and partnerships.
- 3.11.3 The Home Office has also more recently emphasised a desire to see improvements in the productivity of fire and rescue services, setting the sector a 3% annual productivity improvement target. As part of their drive towards greater productivity and efficiency, and linked to flexibilities relating to council tax precept, Ministers have requested that services publish, in March 2023, further information on their future efficiency plans and proposals which are designed to improve service productivity. The CRMP and specifically the projects delivered as part of it are a key means of delivering against this requirement.

3.12 **Three Year Rolling Strategy – Vision, Strategic Objectives, Priorities and Goals**

Our Vision

The three-year strategic objectives 2022-25 remain as set out

below.

Response: Dealing excellently with incidents

Prevention: Delivering services that reduce risk and support safer and healthier communities

Protection: Protecting life and property to make businesses stronger and communities safer

3.13 The refreshed Strategic (Annual) Priorities for 2023-24 are:

Prevention

- We will prevent fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies
- We will focus on reducing health inequalities for our most vulnerable as a means of reducing risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies
- We will educate the community to reduce their risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies
- We will collaborate, and work in partnership with other organisations to reduce the risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies

Protection

- We will protect our communities by targeting high-risk buildings through, intelligence and data
- We will promote economic growth through education and engagement with businesses
- We will carry out our responsibilities under relevant legislation to consult and enforce to make people safer
- We will reduce disruption to businesses and communities of West Midlands
- We will implement learning from national, local and sector-led reviews

Response

- We will respond with the resources you need when you need them to protect what matters to you, to save life,

- reduce harm and protect homes and businesses
- We will be ready to respond in an assertive, effective and safe way to meet our vision.
- We will lead rescue operations, working with others to help make you safer.
- We are ready to respond locally, nationally and internationally.

3.14 **People**

3.14.1 The delivery of the three-year rolling Strategy is best achieved through a motivated, engaged and thriving workforce. Our internal people plan recognises that when our people feel that WMFS is a great place to work, then our communities are the beneficiaries.

For this reason, our three yearly rolling strategy and annual plan will now seek to look inwardly, with a focus on:

- **People** - Continuing to develop and improve the culture within the service, ensuring connectivity at every level. Ensuring we are setting staff up to succeed through further development of Managing vacancies, career pathways and training.
- **Professionalism** - Increased focus on standards and review of training to include TFDP, staff competency and Incident Command.
- **Pride** – In our service, ensuring the appropriate focus is given to the effective use of our estate (Including completion of our HQ transformation), appliances and equipment, standards of appearance.

3.14.2 Through our People plan, WMFS will ensure a renewed and sustained focus on talent management, engagement and communication, Health, Safety & Wellbeing with an uncompromising commitment to Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality (DICE). WMFS will ensure that both physical and mental health issues are treated equally seriously and maintain a continual review of our Health & Wellbeing strategy to make improvements where they are identified.

3.14.3 Our DICE objectives and activities continue to be a key component to ensuring WMFS can achieve its three-year rolling

Strategy in the most effective and targeted way. WMFS has introduced the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Core Code of Ethics into WMFS which will serve as a platform to improve understanding and commitment to the service's core values. We continue to refine our positive action activities to maximise the opportunity of becoming a truly representative organisation.

3.14.4 WMFS's approach to Organisational Development centres around enabling our personal growth which in turn allows greater contribution to making West Midlands Safer, Stronger and Healthier.

3.14.5 Understandably, how we engage and treat our people is a key focus for the Government and Home Office and as such 'People' is a pillar of the HMICFRS Inspection process within which we maintained an overall rating of 'good' during our most recent inspection. We have also improved across all subsections within this pillar that were previously identified 'requires improvement' during the last inspection.

Our refreshed People priorities for 2023-24 are:

3.14.6 We are committed to working together to make WMFS a great place to work for our people and for the benefit of our community, this to be achieved through:

- Recruiting, developing and championing talented people enabling diversity and embracing difference, enabling them to reach their potential.
- Enabling a positive working environment for all our staff and holding all to account for maintaining our core values
- Enabling and developing leaders at all levels
- Valuing the contribution of all of our people allowing everybody's voice to be heard.
- Ensuring our people know that their health, safety and wellbeing is important and will be prioritised by themselves and the service.
- Being uncompromising in our commitment to Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality, ensuring the Service is representative of our community and we have access to the widest talent pool.

- Creating an environment of personal growth and development which will ensure the service can continually adapt and improve.

3.15 **Digital**

- 3.15.1 Digital ways of working increasingly support WMFSs ability to operate in a flexible and agile way. Providing new, different and more efficient approaches to enabling the delivery of services to diverse local communities is a critical part to the implementation of our CRMP objectives and three-year rolling Strategy. This not only provides different ways for us to interact with our communities but also protects and increases our physical contact time with them.
- 3.15.2 Our communities and our people already benefit from innovative ways of working supported by new technologies such as the Dynamic Cover Tool, Microsoft 365 and Tymly. All these tools have provided us with more flexible approaches to working and delivering services in the ever-changing environment we operate in.
- 3.15.3 The recent introduction of the first phase of Oracle has seen us transfer a number of processes from Sandwell council into our own systems, for example Payroll. We have also been able to transform how we manage expenses and upgrade our procurement systems, creating different ways of working that will become even more streamlined and efficient through our ongoing transformation journey. One of the critical areas of value from implementing Oracle is that we now have systems that can talk more effectively to each other, making ways of working across WMFS more effective. This has been an area identified both through our previous HMICFRS inspection and our cultural review. The work done provides a foundation from which to keep building and improving our ways of working.
- 3.15.4 Whilst the ongoing use of digital and data will continue to transform our three-year rolling Strategy, WMFS is acutely aware that those who are most vulnerable may not have access to the technology required, and/or the skills to engage with it. The aspirations set out in our three-year Strategy 2022-25 seek to ensure our services can adapt to meet the needs of these communities as well as enable our communities to engage in a

way which increases their opportunity of access to our services. We continue to work with the partners working to improve digital inclusion and poverty.

Our refreshed Digital and Data priorities for 2023-24 are:

3.15.5 We will enhance and transform services to our communities, underpinning them with innovative and digital solutions, enabling the delivery of our strategy through:

- enabling our workforce to have the best most up to date information to keep them and our communities safer.
- ensuring that we are as efficient and effective as we can be as a service
- sharing data with other blue light services and our partners to ensure better outcomes for our communities.
- engaging with our diverse communities in new ways to help them remain informed and stay safe.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The ongoing development and implementation of CRMP objectives through the Vision, Mission and Strategic Priorities set out in the three-year rolling Strategy, are designed to ensure that our communities and vulnerable groups are not disadvantaged through the delivery of WMFSs services. The risk of fire and other emergency incidents to local communities provide the foundation and evidence base to our CRMP.
- 4.2 Each of the CRMP objectives facilitated through the three-year rolling Strategy, will be subject to equality impact and access assessments to provide the most effective planning and provision of WMFSs services of Prevention, Protection and Response.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report ensure the effective and efficient delivery of Fire and Rescue Authority Services as set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act, Regulatory Reform Order, Emergency Order, Civil Contingencies Act and the

National Framework which incorporates the duties of these Acts, but also the requirements for governance and assurance of performance.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no direct financial implications to the approval of the recommendations in this report.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no environmental implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Our Plan 2022-25
- CRMP 2021-23
- Fire Reform White Paper
- Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase One Report
- Manchester Arena Bombing Inquiry Report
- London Fire Brigade Independent Culture Review report
- Building Safety Act 2022
- [Three Year Rolling Strategy 2022-25 and Annual Plan](#)

The contact name for this report is Richard Stanton – telephone number 07973 810054.

RICHARD STANTON
WAYNE BROWN

Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Chief Fire Officer