

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 MARCH 2020

1. SCRUTINY REVIEWS FOR CONSIDERATION

Report of the Clerk.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Committee note the update on the themes put forward by Members to be considered for review by the Scrutiny Committee, including developments to date.
- 1.2 THAT the Committee confirm the next theme for review to be undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.3 THAT the Committee consider and approve prevention – Safe and Well as the next theme for review, in light of discussions and resolutions at previous meetings of the Committee.
- 1.4 THAT the Committee schedule the review within the Committee's work programme and in doing so, consider if the review is to commence during the current municipal year or is to commence in the next municipal year (with the possibility of a scoping document being submitted prior to the end of this municipal year).

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is submitted to refresh the Committee on the themes previously raised by Members to be considered for review by the Scrutiny Committee, with a view to approve and schedule such a review within the Committee's work programme.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Committee sets out the role of the Committee, the main purpose of the Scrutiny function being to:

- inform policy development
- hold Officers and the Service to account
- hold the Authority to account
- conduct reviews into specific issues

This final point is further elaborated upon within the Terms of Reference as follows: the Committee will identify matters that it wishes to conduct reviews into and call the relevant Officers and Members to assist it in carrying out those reviews.

- 3.2 As part of its role and functions, the Committee is to 'carry out a maximum of two scrutiny reviews per annum selected by the Committee. Such reviews will be Member led and evidence based, and will produce SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) recommendations to the Authority'.

4. **THEMES FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS – DEVELOPMENTS TO DATE AND PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 A Scrutiny Review workshop was held at the conclusion of the Policy Planning Forum held on 17 September 2019, where Members considered themes which could form the basis of future reviews to be undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee:

- Business Continuity Arrangements
- Prevention – Safe and Well
- Operational training and effectiveness
- Discipline Policy

- 4.2 A report outlining the themes was subsequently submitted to the Committee at its meeting on 7 October 2019 (see background papers). The outcomes of the meeting were that:

- the Committee agreed to undertake the review of the Service's business continuity arrangements. The review was undertaken over a period of three consecutive meetings, with the recommendation of the Committee being submitted for consideration by the Fire Authority on 18 November 2019.
- the Committee agreed to undertake a review of the performance of prevention activities, in particular the delivery of Safe and Well visits including a focus on the quantity versus quality of Safe and Well visits undertaken.

- the Committee agreed that the themes of operational training and effectiveness and discipline policy would be the subject of a Members' awareness session. To this end, Members received employment law training on 27 January 2020 which covered topics including wider discipline policy.

- 4.3 In light of the above, and based on the resolutions of previous meetings of the Committee, it is recommended that Members consider confirming that prevention – Safe and Well will be the next theme to be reviewed and that the review is scheduled within the Committee's work programme.
- 4.4 In the event of scheduling any review, the Committee may wish to consider the practicalities of scheduling a review to be undertaken in a period covering more than one municipal year. Therefore, the Committee may wish to consider scheduling the scoping document within the current municipal year with a view to undertaking the review after the Authority Annual General Meeting in June 2020, for example for the first Committee meeting of municipal year 2020/21.

5. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report, an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out. The matters contained within this report will not lead to a policy change.

6. **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.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019-2020
Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference
Scrutiny Reviews – Scrutiny Committee 07.10.19
Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee – 11.11.19

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