

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**13 OCTOBER 2014**

1. **PROGRESS REPORT ADDRESSING THE RECOMMENDATIONS  
ARISING OUT OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF PUBLIC  
CONSULTATION**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

RECOMMENDED

THAT the Committee notes the progress made in addressing the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Committee review of public consultation.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is submitted to provide the Committee with an update on the Service's progress in addressing the recommendations arising out of the Scrutiny Committee review of the Authority's public consultation process which were approved by the Executive Committee on 9 December 2013.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At its meeting of 8 April 2013, the Scrutiny Committee agreed to review the public consultation process in relation to the Authority's Community Safety Strategy as part of its work programme. This was due to the seemingly poor response rate in respect of the consultation undertaken on the 2013/16 Community Safety Strategy. The findings of the Scrutiny Committee and subsequent 16 recommendations arising (attached as Appendix 1) as a consequence of the review were approved by Executive Committee at its meeting on 9 December 2013.

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- 3.2 In addressing these recommendations officers of West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) have worked together to determine the most efficient and effective way of delivering the desired outcomes and as a result have formulated a strategic approach which encapsulates the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee review. In principle the recommendations of this will be delivered through the Community Membership model.

### **Community Membership Model**

- 3.3 The key strategic outcomes from this model will:

- improve quality of consultation with The Plan and The Community Safety Strategy;
- improve the awareness of the portfolio of work that WMFS delivers to our diverse communities;
- increase the public value of how the Fire Service as a public body contributes to local communities; and
- increase the contribution of our diverse communities to shaping The Plan and the Community Safety Strategy and support delivery of our service

- 3.4 This model is based upon The West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) Foundation Trust which has 8,600 members and is designed to provide qualitative feedback to help shape their future service. Officers will engage with our (community) members through regular newsletters and social media informing on what we are both doing and planning to do. This will provide an informative group of diverse community members with whom we will consult with when we carry out consultation of our Community Safety Strategy. Officers have identified various methodologies to create a suitable database:

- WMAS Foundation Trust has agreed to share their data base of 8,600 members;
- Youth Emergency Services Forum (YES) - a strategic partnership initiative started through The Future Melting Pot and WMFS which engages with seldom heard youth aged 14-21;
- WMFS Partnerships. Local station partnerships and also partnerships through Community Fire Safety;

- Community Engagement strategies through Equality and Diversity Supporting Strategy (DICE); and
- elected members of WMFRA

A leaflet that will be found both online and also through options as described above can be found as Appendix 2.

#### 4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

The Community member's project will be significant in furthering the Authority's responsibilities and action under the Public Sector Equality Duties under the Equality Act 2010. In particular, the project will advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different communities through the activities that are undertaken.

Ongoing equality analysis is a key part of the Community member's project and there will be ongoing monitoring and review to determine any adverse or positive impact. Formal equality analysis will take place at the Project Plan followed by a six month review to be undertaken.

#### 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 significant financial implications arising from implementing the recommendations set out in Appendix 1 that cannot be met from existing budgets. To date £800 has been spent on the production of leaflets.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Scrutiny Committee, Review of Consultation Methods, 8 April 2013  
Executive Committee, Recommendations of the Public Consultation Review  
of the Community Safety Strategy 2013/16, 9 December 2013

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