WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

COLLABORATION AND TRANSFORMATION COMMITTEE

15 MAY 2023

1. **Consultation Update**

   Report of the Chief Fire Officer

   RECOMMENDED

1.1 The Authority note the content of this report.

1.2 That Authority members provide their responses to the questions outlined within paragraph 3.5.2 to officers.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1 To provide an update in relation to collaboration elements of the consultation.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 In 2023/24 West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority (WMFRA) will need to develop our next Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), as the current CRMP comes to an end this year. We aim to comprehensively update our CRMP on a three yearly cycle in line with the National Fire and Rescue Framework. The timeline can be viewed below.

Initial themes to WMFRA at PPF for feedback	24 April 2023
Questions to WMFRA at PPF for feedback	22 May 2023
Design by Corporate Communications	23 May – 23 June 2023
Final Sign off from WMFRA	26 June
Consultation begins	3 July
Consultation ends	11 September
Initial feedback to WMFRA at PPF and FA	September/October 2023
CRMP draft to WMFRA for consideration	December 2023

3.2. <u>**Consultation Themes**</u>

3.2.1 It is proposed that WMFRA consult on five themes during the consultation:

- Prevention
- Protection
- Response
- People
- Sustainability

3.2.2. The first three listed should be familiar to partners and the public. People and Sustainability reflect two key areas given the focus on culture and values in the FRS and incorporate the Government Strategy of decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet a net zero carbon target by 2050 nationally. It is intended that we will ask no more than three questions in each area to keep the consultation to a practical length.

3.2.3 The intention will be to not only receive feedback in these areas but use this as an opportunity to build public and partner understanding of our approach to CRMP, the work we have already undertaken and our intentions for the future.

3.3 <u>**Target Audiences**</u>

3.3.1 We recognise that there are a number of different stakeholders and audiences who will wish to have input to the development of our CRMP through this consultation. Each will offer different perspectives and will need to be engaged with in different ways. These can be broadly divided into three categories:

- Our communities – Members of the public of all ages, genders, ethnic background, religions and sexual orientations.
- Our partners – Local politicians, central government, blue light partners, local authorities, NHS, education, business groups, charity and voluntary sector.
- Our internal stakeholders – Our staff, network groups, representative bodies and retired colleagues.

3.3.2 It is important for all three groups that we target a broad and representative range of respondents. While we will of course want

to see a large number of responses, their quality and breadth is just as important as their quantity.

3.4 **Collaboration to Support Consultation**

3.4.1 Our CRMP assesses current and future risks faced by our communities. From incident data, we understand the factors that increase an individual's vulnerability and the factors that contribute to the likelihood of them requiring access to our services. We also know these factors are similar across all public services. Therefore, collaboration with other public services, including West Midlands Police, West Midlands Ambulance Service, Local Authorities and health partners, provides us with a greater opportunity to reach the most vulnerable. This will enable us to maximise community engagement with the consultation, with the intention of gaining valuable feedback to strengthen our future resilience, effectiveness, and efficiency.

3.4.2 The more diverse the communities and partners we reach through the consultation, the more and varied views we will have to support the development of the next CRMP. When shaping our services to manage risk, we are committed to meaningful consultation and engagement with the community we serve and the partners we work alongside. Furthermore, WMFRA recognises good practice from polling and commits to have a representative set of responses. This will, for example, include splitting out the views of staff (who will likely skew any results) and setting ourselves specific targets for age groups, gender and ethnicity.

3.4.3 To enable as much of a representative response as is possible from our diverse communities, partners and businesses, it is hoped that a wide range of views and opinions will be collected. It is our intention to make the consultation as accessible as possible to respondents by utilising the many platforms that are available to us. Engagement with members of our communities will require the support of all staff and partners to help embed, drive and push awareness.

3.4.4 A comprehensive engagement and collaboration plan is in development to ensure we maximise the opportunity for partners and the community to respond. As part of this, our consultation team are meeting with all areas of the organisation to identify partners we can work with and highlight opportunities to collaborate to reach audiences and groups that are representative of the community. A full list of stakeholders can be found in Appendix 1.

3.4.5 In addition to internal engagement sessions with each department, we aim to host multi-agency engagement sessions, to work with partners to identify further opportunities to reach vulnerable members of the community as well as promote the consultation with organisations we wish to formally respond to the consultation. The below provides a number of examples of avenues we will explore in order to generate further collaboration opportunities:

- Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Communications Subgroup
- LRF Chief Officer Group, General Working Group and Local resilience Groups for each local authority area
- Community Safety Partnerships
- Health and Wellbeing Boards

3.4.6 Given the diversity of target audiences, the aim will be to use a wide range of methods, in particular those "hard to reach" parts of the community. This will include:

- Wmfs.net website (multi-language)
- WM Now
- Social media
- Targeted written communication to partners
- Safe and well visits / Safe and Strong
- Face-to-face engagement with partners, WMFS staff/network groups and representative bodies.
- Station Open Days and other community events
- Paid for advertising on local transport networks

3.4.7 As an example, a recent engagement session with our Prevention teams have highlighted several collaboration opportunities, including working in partnership with the below groups and organisations to promote the consultation survey to groups within the West Midlands, including our most vulnerable:

- Schools
- Early Help Teams/Hubs
- Refugee and Migrant Centres via Local Authorities
- Prevention Advocate Volunteers (who speak a variety of languages)
- Complex Needs Officers
- Cadets and families
- Prevention Partners during day-to-day activities

3.5 <u>**Fire Authority Support**</u>

3.5.1 It is hoped that Members can play a key role in supporting responses to the consultation. This would include encouraging response from fellow politicians and from their local authorities, promoting the consultation via social and conventional media and directly encouraging community response as part of their role.

3.5.2 Members are encouraged to provide further options and ideas as to how we can increase engagement with the consultation. Please consider the below questions:

1. How could Members further promote our consultation to support meaningful and representative responses from the public, staff and partners?
2. Are you aware of any other stakeholders that are not listed in Appendix 1 that we should engage with as part of the consultation?
3. Is there anything you need in order for you to support and promote the consultation? (e.g. we are developing a consultation pack to provide the relevant background information to support our staff to promote the consultation).

4. <u>**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**</u>

4.1 In preparing this report, an Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out. The updates contained within this report will not lead to policy change but will provide an update on relevant CRMP projects. A full EIA is in development in relation to the consultation.

5. <u>**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**</u>

5.1 As set out in section 3.1, The National Framework for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in England 2018, sets the requirement for the development and implementation of a CRMP. The government has a duty under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to produce the framework and keep it current. Fire and rescue authorities must have regard to the framework in carrying out their duties.

6. <u>**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**</u>

6.1 No financial implications identified at this stage.

7. <u>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS</u>

7.1   In preparing this report, an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

<u>BACKGROUND PAPERS</u>
N/A

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CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Appendix 1: Stakeholders

Stakeholders
Members of the public
BAME
Youth
LGBTQ+
Religious minorities
Representatives of other 'hard-to-reach' groups and partnerships formed during the Covid pandemic
WMFS Employees
Staff Networking Groups
Retired Employees
FBU / Unison / FOA
Fire Authority
MPs x 28
Local Authorities x7 (to include DPH, CEOs, Adult and Child social services etc.)
Local Councillors x 470
Sutton Town Council
Home Office
Home Secretary/Fire Minister
Shadow Home Secretary / Shadow Fire Minister
West Midlands Combined Authority (to include Mayor and various teams)
Transport for WM
West Midlands Police
UK Fire & Rescue Services
British Transport Police
Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
West Midlands Ambulance Service
Community Safety Partnerships x7
Local Resilience Forum
Health and Wellbeing Boards x7
NHS Trusts x14
Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) x 7

Integrated Care Boards
Care Home Providers
Private hospitals
Network Rail
Bus & Coach Operators
Highways England
Birmingham Airport
Environment Agency
Health and Safety Executive
UK Health Protection Agency
Met Office
Utilities Providers
Cadent
Water Providers
Telephone Service Providers
Black Country Chamber of Commerce
Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce
Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce
Birmingham Voluntary Service Council
Voluntary Action Coventry
Dudley Council for Voluntary Service
Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations
Warwickshire and Solihull Community and Voluntary Action
One Walsall
Wolverhampton Voluntary and Community Action
Business Improvement Districts (Public-Private partnerships covering specific local areas)
Universities & student unions
Local Education Partnerships
Further education institutions (colleges)