

# **WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**7 OCTOBER 2019**

### **1. SCRUTINY REVIEWS**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 THAT the Committee note the themes put forward by Members to be considered for review by the Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 THAT the Committee approve a maximum of two reviews for the Committee to undertake during the municipal year (2019-20).
- 1.2 THAT the Committee consider the inclusion of any review into the work programme of the Committee.
- 1.4 THAT the Committee approve the additions to the Scrutiny Committee work programme.

### **2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is submitted to enable the Committee to identify a maximum of two reviews to undertake during the municipal year of 2019-20 and to include such review(s) within the Committee's work programme.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

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.

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**

4.1 To support the effectiveness of the Scrutiny Committee, 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. These themes have been compiled and are listed below for consideration by Members for inclusion within the work programme of the Committee:

##### 4.2 Business Continuity Arrangements:

- To review the recommendations made by the Chief Fire Officer to meet the Fire Authority's responsibility for sufficient business continuity and resilience arrangements for the delivery of response services.
- The scope of the review will be to consider the two options submitted to the Authority by the Chief Fire Officer in providing additional business continuity arrangements. These options are:
  1. A contingent workforce.
  2. An external provider.
- This review item is being progressed. A meeting of the Committee was convened on 26 September to consider the subject in more detail, with a view to submit the Committee's recommendation at the Fire Authority on 30 September (due to the requirement to publish reports five clear working days before meetings, this report was produced and published prior to the Fire Authority meeting).

#### 4.3 Prevention – Safe and Well:

- To review the performance management 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.

#### 4.4 Operational training and effectiveness:

- To review the approach to operational training and effectiveness within the Service.
- To consider if this theme should constitute a review by the Committee or form the basis of a Member awareness session.

#### 4.5 Discipline policy:

- To review the reasons for the level of discipline cases undertaken within the Service and to consider the route and rationale for gross misconduct versus misconduct.
- Both the Scrutiny Committee and the Joint Consultative Panel review discipline and grievance information as part of their respective roles. As a result, Members are asked to consider if this theme should constitute a review by the Committee or should form an awareness session for all Members of the Fire Authority, which would support understanding of what constitutes disciplines and grievances, and how decisions are made.

#### 4.6 Upon confirmation and approval of the reviews for which the Committee will undertake, Members are asked to consider the Committee work programme and to schedule the reviews accordingly. It should be noted that the Scrutiny Committee terms of reference stipulate that ‘in addition to its programmed meetings, the Committee will hold additional meetings, as and when required, in order to efficiently manage its workload’.

### 7. **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.

8. **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.

9. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

10. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019-2020  
Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference

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CHIEF FIRE OFFICER