

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

13 APRIL 2015

1. **THE PLAN 2015-18**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer, the Clerk and the Monitoring Officer.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Authority approves The Plan 2015-18.
- 1.2 THAT the Authority notes the interactive approach to communicating The Plan.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

Members are asked to approve The Plan and note the interactive approach to its communication. The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) will provide an overview to Members which will explain the benefits of the more interactive approach to communication.

3. **BACKGROUND**

Development of The Plan 2015-18

- 3.1 At the Authority Meeting on 16 February 2015, Members approved the priorities, strategic objectives and outcomes for 2015-16 to be set out in the Service's rolling three year corporate strategy – The Plan 2015-18. This approval provided the framework against which The Plan has been developed.
- 3.2 In line with the approach taken to developing the appropriate priorities, strategic objectives and outcomes, the rolling three year Plan has been refined and updated as opposed to fundamentally rewritten. In undertaking this approach the following factors have been considered:

- risk analysis
- organisational restructure
- changes made to strategic objectives in June 2014
- the requirement to enable continuity in order to support performance improvement
- the external environment; including the ongoing funding reduction

3.3 Risk analysis provides the evidence base and informs the Service as to what its priorities, objectives and outcomes should be and whether any changes are required to these or our service delivery model to enable the optimum achievement of improved outcomes for our community. Our Community Safety Strategy sets out in detail the risk based analysis that has informed the recommendations above. Following a review of the risk analysis, there has not been any significant change to risk in the West Midlands and as such our priorities, strategic objectives, outcomes and plan content remains appropriate to achieve our vision, as does the delivery model that is currently in place.

3.4. Members will recall that the Service implemented a new management structure in September 2014. As part of these structural arrangements, the Service introduced a Service Support and Service Delivery structural model. The Service refreshed its strategic objectives in order to focus upon the core prevention protection and response services that we deliver to our community through our Service Delivery directorate. The Plan content was aligned to enabling the delivery of these strategic objectives and outcomes and as these haven't changed it is appropriate that The Plan is only refreshed.

3.5 In producing its corporate strategy the Service has considered and understands the challenges presented by and the scale of continued central Government grant reduction for the next three years. As part of this work the Strategic Enabling Team has undertaken a horizon scan to consider the impact of all external influences.

3.6 The Plan is a rolling three year document. It is supported by a robust performance reporting framework that provides the intelligence for change as and when it is required. The Plan, as demonstrated by last year's changes (3.4 above) is responsive to change as and when it is required.

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Members should be assured that should any change to The Plan be required the Service has the intelligence systems and performance reporting framework to respond accordingly.

Communication of The Plan

- 3.7 In keeping with the approach of previous years, The Plan will be published on the Service's website www.wmfs.net and the production of paper copies will be limited to upon request only.
- 3.8 However, following feedback received regarding the way in which the Plan is published and to take advantage of a continual technological advancement a 'Sounding Board' group was commissioned. The objective of the Sounding Board, which was made up of a cross section of internal stakeholders, was to consider and develop a proposal taking full advantage of all the information technology opportunities available to make The Plan more interactive and interesting to the reader.
- 3.9 The Sounding Board, working in partnership with our Corporate Communications team recognised that the way in which The Plan 2014-17 was published did not encourage people to engage with it. Therefore, the proposed plan has reduced the amount of words used and maximised the use of info-graphics, whilst providing the reader opportunities to interact with The Plan in terms of information they want to read as well as providing the opportunity to feedback upon its content. Maximising technology in this way gives The Plan a modern, vibrant and engaging feel making it more relevant and receptive to the reader as it meets their expectations in terms of what a web based document should offer in terms of functionality.
- 3.10 The implementation of this new approach will enable the Service to set the gold standard and achieve excellence in the way in which it communicates key corporate information to the community it serves. This is particularly important as we move towards consultation upon our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which is likely to begin in Autumn 2015. Previous consultation approaches have taught us that as part of a wider, continuous engagement and consultation strategy a web based, interactive element to consultation has been the best way to elicit community involvement.

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3.11 In support of the interactive plan, the CFO will provide a brief overview at today's Authority meeting explaining how the interactive Plan will work.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken for The Plan 2013-16. Given that there is no significant change to the latest plan, a further assessment is not required.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Fire and Rescue National Framework requires the production of an IRMP. The Framework is given statutory power by reference to it in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

An external service provider has been commissioned to undertake the development of the web based plan. The costs in respect of this are circa £8.5K which have been met from existing budgets.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Executive Committee, 24 March 2015, Agenda Item 5, The Plan 2014-2017

Fire Authority, 21 July 2014, Agenda Item 14, The Plan 2014-2017

Fire Authority, 16 February 2015, Agenda item 7, The Plan 2015-2018

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