

WYFRA	FIRE AUTHORITY	21 DECEMBER 2007	ITEM NO
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**REPORT OF:** DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:** TO REPORT REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED TO THE DRAFT INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN 2008/9

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO CONSIDER THE REPORT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE

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**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT DETAILS**

**EXEMPTION CATEGORY:** None

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Mr. S. P. Hardy  
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**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Draft Y5 IRMAP, Fire Authority Report,  
7 September 2007

Representations received

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The draft Integrated Risk Management Action Plan 2008/9 was considered by West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority on 7 September when it was agreed to release the document for public consultation.

## **2 CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS**

- 2.1 Central government guidance on the consultation ministers expect fire authorities to undertake when developing IRM Action Plans was issued in April 2003 and forms the basis upon which the Authority seeks public comment.

- 2.2 Authorities must demonstrate consultation with:

- the general public e.g. Council Tax-payers
- relevant community organisations
- public representatives e.g. Members of Parliament
- business organisations
- local authorities, public agencies and other emergency services
- employees (uniformed and non-uniformed) and their representatives
- any other interested parties.

## **3 FIFTH-YEAR ACTION PLAN**

- 3.1 Although the guidelines for best practice on consultation published by the Cabinet Office compliment the process adopted by the Authority, particularly by providing for a named consultation co-ordinator and also by providing a means of feedback to consultees, attempts have been made year-on-year to refine such exercises. Specifically, it has been recognized that documentation must be received by appropriate people within organisations, that there is corporate ownership of certain responses and that the consultation process is appropriate to need.

- 3.2 In order to improve the quality of consultation, the summer months were once again used to involve principal stakeholders - including relevant Members of Parliament and the district and local town councils – in informal discussion around the principles of reform and the options for change.

## **4 FORMAL CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Almost 100 stakeholders were identified for direct contact, ranging from the CLG, Audit Commission, regional CBI and TUC to neighbouring fire authorities, district/town councils, the representative bodies and interest groups such as Wetherby Business Association. Representations were invited by 3 December.

- 4.2 In recognition of the fact that it was not possible to communicate individually with all those who may have wished to submit observations the proposals were publicised via the internet, through staff briefings and the print and broadcast media and by the use of advertising. In addition, copies of the draft plan were sent to appropriate libraries and a special Hotline was established in the corporate Media and Public Relations Unit for people seeking further information and assistance on the consultation process and timetable.

4.3 A public meeting, chaired by the Chair of the Authority, was held in Wetherby Town Hall on 17 September but attracted only nine people. The main focus was on the operational proposals for NE Leeds. The two principal concerns voiced related to:

- doubts about the Authority's ability to attract sufficient people to the day crewing system
- longer turn-out times during evenings and at night-time.

4.4 Officers addressed a number of people and organisations on request, including the Garforth and Swillington Forum. A presentation was made to local Elected Members of Leeds City Council on 12 October. The offer of a separate briefing for the council leadership was declined.

## **5 FORMAL REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

5.1 Only four formal representations have been received and these have been made available for Member consideration.

5.2 The FBU response welcomed the opportunity for 'a clear and open period of pre-consultation.' It also welcomed the 'positive steps' affecting Garforth and Wetherby (a more detailed executive summary appears in the union's submission).

5.3 Leeds City Council raised concerns about the risk assessment methodology, sought clarification relating to fire and rescue provision in Wetherby and Garforth and recommended that the Authority publishes a cost/benefit analysis of the Action Plan.

5.4 The Authority's Fire Safety and Community Relations Directorate had concerns that the Retail Enforcement Pilot, as originally proposed in the Action Plan, may not be able to proceed. An appropriate reference to future support for inter-agency work on reducing regulatory burdens has thus been included in Section Five: Prevention and Protection Framework Update.

5.5 Calderdale Council's Community Services Scrutiny Panel had no issue with the Action Plan but registered concerns about current staffing levels at Mytholmroyd Fire Station and sought assurance that turnout times were as good, if not better, than the average for other retained stations in West Yorkshire. Officers will attend a meeting to clarify matters in January.

5.6 The consultation Hotline received four calls.

## **6 CONCLUSION AND FEEDBACK**

6.1 Members are invited to consider this report alongside the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive's responses to the issues raised. Consultees will be notified of the Fire Authority's decisions on this matter.