Purpose of Report

1. To inform elected members of the current status of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) involvement with the “Bike Safe” scheme and the proposed future development of this element of the broader motorcycle response project.

Recommendations

2. That the members note the contents of this report on the bikesafe initiative.

3. That the members approve proposals to report to the authority as to the further development of the bikesafe scheme.

Background

4. Bikesafe is a national initiative adopted by many of the police forces throughout the country to engage motorcyclists in an education programme and can be used as a conduit to further learning. Previously Merseyside Police did not engage in such a scheme. However, due to the increase in numbers of bikers killed or seriously injured on the roads both locally and nationally and following a demonstration by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) of how a self-financing scheme can be proactive in promoting road safety and raising skills awareness within a group they then became partners in the “Bike Safe” scheme.

Subsequently following an official press launch on 16th August, 2005 detailing the joint initiative between Merseyside Police, MFRS and Wirral Borough Council Road Safety Department a successful bike safe workshop was completed on 10th/11th September, 2005 at Bromborough fire station with a second planned for 15th/16th October, 2005.

5. A website linked with the partners and the facility to apply for places on the workshops is active with plans to update information as the project continues to develop in line with national guidance.
6. Future plans include a regular workshop itinerary from March next year and throughout the motorcycling season with the possibility of hosting a roadsafe event. A voucher system to run prior to the Christmas period so relatives can purchase a workshop for friends or family is to be tied into a media campaign supporting this.

7. Wirral road safety have provided funding to set up equipment resources and advertising.

8. Involvement of local Institute of advanced motorcyclists, and inclusion of a first aid module presented by consultant anaesthetist Dr. John Harrison from the Hyperbaric unit Murrayfield hospital helps make the project cost effective and credible to all parties.

9. Requests have already been received from dealers to help promote the bikesafe scheme and to be involved. Local motorcycle meeting places have been leafleted and are supported by the venue proprietors.

10. Articles, leaflets and posters featuring the fire bikes involvement in road safety have been published within trade literature. This has lead to national recognition of MFRS involvement in the scheme and has also seen an invitation to this year’s promotion at the NEC bike show and next year’s bikesafe launch at Gloucestershire.

11. The project has exceeded its expected outcomes on road safety as initially proposed in CFO/16/05.

Equality & Diversity Implications

12. None arising

Financial Implications

13. None arising from this report