Service Policy: STRATPOL12 Stakeholder Consultation Policy

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August 2017	April 2028	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

Amendment History:

Version	Date	Author	Reasons for Change
1.0	April 2018	[redacted]	New Policy
1.1	April 2019	[redacted]	Annual Review
1.2	July 2020	[redacted]	Annual Review
1.3	April 2021	[redacted]	Annual Review
1.4	April 2023	[redacted]	Annual Review
1.5	April 2025	[redacted]	Annual Review
1.6	April 2026	[redacted]	Annual Review

Equalities Impact Assessment:

Initial	Full	Date	Reviewed by	Comments
	X	2023 – reviewed 2024, 2026	ED&I TEAM	LOCATED ON THE PORTAL

Civil Contingencies Impact Assessment:

Date	Reviewed by	Comments

Related Documents:

Doc. Type	Ref No.	Title	Location
Service Instruction		Consultation & Engagement Framework	Portal
Fire Standard		Internal Governance and assurance	Portal
Fire Standard		Community Risk Management Planning	Portal

Name	Position	Department

Sign-Off List:

Name	Position

Target Audience:

All MFRS	Principal Officers	Senior Officers	Operational Crews	Fire Safety	Community Fire Safety	Support Staff
X						

Ownership:

FOI exemption required?	Yes		URL	
	No	X	Reason	

Legislation:

Title	Equality Act 2010
	CIPFA/SOLACE Framework (Delivering Good Governance in Local Government)

Contact:

Department	Email	Telephone ext.
STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE	[redacted]	

POLICY

STRATPOL12 Stakeholder Consultation Policy

1. Policy Introduction and Background:

The duty to involve stakeholders when making changes to services is a statutory obligation applying to specified bodies, requiring them to consult and involve individuals, groups, businesses or organisations likely to be affected by their actions. The duty to involve was introduced in the Local Government and Public Health Act 2007 s.138; The Localism Act 2011 s.10 provides for consultation before charging for certain services; s.122 for pre planning and Chapter 6 for national infrastructure projects.

Guidance for local authorities to help interpret the duty is contained in 2008 CLG publication Safe, Strong and Prosperous Communities.

Other legislation and guidance also governs the way Fire and Rescue Authorities are required to consult, for example:

- The Gunning Principles 1985
- The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018
- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- The Equality Act 2010 – Introduction to Public Sector Equality Duties
- NFCC Community Risk Management Planning Guidance 2023 (and associated National Fire Standard)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- HM Government – A guide to inclusive social research practices

Our stakeholder consultation is designed to:

- Encourage greater stakeholder involvement, engagement and interest in Fire and Rescue Authority decisions
- Deliver stronger community relationships
- Plan services and policies based on the needs and views of people
- Identify priorities for the Fire and Rescue Authority and improve our strategies and services to achieve them

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- Monitor the performance of our services over time

2. Policy Explanation:

Our Approach to Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement

This Policy forms part of a wider communications, consultation and engagement approach that sets out how the Authority will engage with stakeholders through communication and consultation. That engagement will be used to inform and influence the Authority's decision making processes, involving stakeholders in the work and future direction of the Service.

Our consultation will be developed to be accessible to, and targeted at, those people who are most affected by our plans, proposals and decisions. This will also include being:

- Timely and cost effective
- Interactive and well facilitated
- Inclusive and accessible
- Transparent with a fair interpretation of community views

All aspects of consultation policy and activity will take account of the cultural and community diversity to ensure that our services are delivered equitably, are accessible and are developed with appropriate stakeholder involvement.

The Authority will ensure that our consultation exercises use an appropriate range of consultation methods designed to be cost effective and targeted accordingly. Where consultation exercises need to reach a diverse audience, several approaches may be required.

MFRA's approach to dissemination of information will be pro-active and cost effective. We will give consideration to producing alternative versions of documents when requests, e.g audio, braille, Easy Read and alternative languages.

Full details on how to plan for, deliver and report on community consultation are included in SI 0881 Consultation and Engagement Framework

Evaluation and Review

Following each consultation exercise, the lead department will review the results of that consultation process and present the outcomes back to whichever body is responsible for making future decisions on the matter. This could be the Authority for major strategic consultation exercises or a project team for smaller consultations. In either case, the full outcomes and responses should be reported back to the decision making body to inform their decision.

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Those responsible for the consultation should also review the effectiveness of the process and any ways in which consultation could be improved in the future.

3. Policy Implementation:

The Consultation and Engagement Service Instruction will ensure that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority actively seeks and considers the views of the stakeholders as part of the decision-making process when reviewing its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and changes to fire and rescue services.

The Service Instructions used to underpin this Policy are:

SI 0881 Consultation and Engagement Framework

Users should familiarise themselves with these Service Instructions

All Policies can be found on the Website

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