

**NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
FIRE AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE PANEL REPORT**

DATE:	31 st January 2005
REPORT BY:	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	To advise Members of forthcoming trials in respect of co-responding as detailed in the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the first Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) was endorsed and adopted by the Fire Authority in March 2004.
- 1.2 The IRMP contains a section entitled "Challenges for the Future" which states that, during the process of gathering information, Members identified a number of issues on which they felt, with more time and further exploration, they would wish to take a view.
- 1.3 One of these issues is "co-responding" and this paper informs Members of the initiation of trials to further understand the implications of adopting the scheme and provide Members with a full report of the trials' findings.

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 "Co-responding" is the simultaneous mobilising of a Fire and Rescue Service resource with the Ambulance to life threatening medical emergencies in locations where a suitable Service resource is more readily available.
- 2.2 The intention is to provide local communities with additional life saving services and a more rapid response.
- 2.3 Co-responding would entail training firefighters and maintaining competence in resuscitation techniques which would include the use of defibrillators.

3. **INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Chapter 4 in the 'near' final draft of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales covers "Effective Response". In sub section 14 of this particular chapter the Welsh Assembly Government states that the aim of emergency response is to reduce deaths and the number and severity of injuries and that, if outcomes can be improved by working with other service providers, this should be pursued.

3. **INFORMATION** *(continued)*

- 3.2 The same sub section continues with a descriptive example of the responder scheme in Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and praises its success and further expansion. The section concludes with the following statement, "We believe that these schemes should be expanded to encompass all areas of Wales and will support discussions between Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities and the medical and ambulance service to explore the further advantages and implications of this, perhaps initially on a priority basis."
- 3.3 Scoping talks have already taken place with the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (the Trust). These discussions have covered selection, supervision, call categorisation, mobilisation, scene arrival and training.
- 3.4 The Trust would be interested in collaborating on a series of trials, at a limited number of stations, predominantly to the west of the Service area.
- 3.5 Assurances have been given that Fire and Rescue Service resources will only be mobilised to incidents that have been identified by the Trust's Advanced Medical Priority Despatch System (AMPDS) as being life threatening.

4. **CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 Undertaking trials of co-responding would provide the best possible indication of the full range of implications for both the community and the Service of the scheme. It will also provide factual evidence of the actual costs and commitment required to sustain the scheme.

5. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 Members note the contents of the report.
- 5.2 Members to receive a report in the third quarter of 2006 with a comprehensive analysis of the co-responding trials and a recommendation on the sustainability of undertaking the scheme.