

GMCA Audit Committee

Date: 22 January 2021

Subject: Risk Management Update Report

Report of: Head of Audit and Assurance, GMCA

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Audit Committee of the risk management activities undertaken since the last Meeting and to present responses to specific questions raised by the Audit Committee around risk.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Audit Committee is requested to consider and comment on the report.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

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Risk Management – see paragraph

Legal Considerations – n/a

Financial Consequences – Revenue – see paragraph 4

Financial Consequences – Capital – see paragraph

Number of attachments included in the report: None

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		No
TfGMC	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
N/A	N/A	

1 Introduction

As the Audit Committee are aware, the Head of Audit and Assurance has resumed responsibility for developing a risk management framework for GMCA. At the Audit Committee meeting in November 2020, the proposed Risk Management Framework was presented for review and comment. Based on that, the final version of the framework has now ready to be launched.

This report provides an update on progress with the implementation plan and with more specific updates on GMFRS risks, as requested at the November 2020 meeting.

2 Risk Management Framework Implementation

An implementation plan was presented at the November meeting and we will provide regular updates to the Audit Committee on progress against that plan. A number of phases of implementation are included in the plan:

1. Develop the Risk Management Framework
2. Undertake a Risk Management Maturity Audit
3. Raise awareness and understanding across GMCA
4. Align the Corporate Risk register to the new framework
5. Develop departmental risk registers

As at this time, Phases 1 and 2 are complete and on track (respectively). Phases 3-5 have yet to be progressed.

In hindsight, setting concurrent timescales for these phases was ambitious so a revision to the original timescales is proposed, with Phases 3-5 now scheduled to run to the end of Q1 21/22 which is an extension of one quarter from the original timescales.

Appendix A provides an update of progress with the implementation plan.

3 Audit Committee Review

A full review and update of the GMCA Corporate Risk Register for originally scheduled in the Committee Schedule of Business to take place in January 2021. However, given the imminent conversion of the current CRR to the new format, the new risk register will be brought for review and comment to the April 2021 Audit Committee meeting.

4 GMFRS Risks

At the previous Audit Committee meeting, Members requested information regarding two risks relating to GMFRS that were contained within the Corporate Risk Register. These were:

- CA11: GMFRS - MTA Response (Marauding Terrorist Attack)
- CA13: GMFRS - Service Disruption

A paper from the Deputy Chief Fire Officer with further detail about those risks was commissioned and circulated to Members on 30 November 2020. That is appended to this document for reference (Appendix B).

A brief update on the status of both those risks as at January 2021 is as follows:

- **MTA capability** – an agreement has been reached with the Fire Brigade’s Union to allow this capability to be introduced for a 8-month period. MTA Specialist Responder training is underway for the affected staff and arrangements will go live once training has been completed.
- **Service disruption** – the Service has continued to respond to the implications of Covid on a BCM related footing. An agreement has been reached with the Fire Brigade’s Union regarding pre-arranged overtime and this is being used to address shortfalls in crewing of appliances. In addition, the Service has engaged with the GMCA Internal Audit team to undertake an assessment of key locations from a Covid safe perspective.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer will be in attendance at the January 2021 Audit Committee Meeting to answer any further questions regarding GMFRS risks.

APPENDIX A – RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In order to effectively embed this risk management framework within GMCA there need to be a number of actions that initially take place to raise awareness and understanding of risk management but in the longer term to ensure GMCAs culture around risk management continues to evolve and mature so that it is an efficient and effective process within the organisation.

This implementation plan sets out the short, medium and long term action needed to implement the framework.

Activity	Responsibility	Original Timescale	Revised Timescale	Status
1. Develop the Risk Management Framework				
a) Define the risk management framework	HoAA	October 2020		Complete
b) Obtain SLT buy-in and support for the risk framework	HoAA	November 2020		Complete
c) CEMT approval of framework	HoAA	Prior to 13 November 2020		Complete
d) Audit Committee review and comment	HoAA	20 November 2020 (papers by 13 November)		Complete
2. Baseline risk management activity – Risk Management Maturity Audit				
a) Draft Terms of Reference for Risk Management Maturity audit	HoAA	October 2020		Complete
b) Approve Terms of Reference	SLT	November 2020		Complete
c) Undertake Internal Audit	Internal Audit	November – December 2020		Complete
d) Report results to SLT	Internal Audit	January 2021		On Track
3. Raise awareness and understanding across GMCA (excl GMFRS)				
a) Develop training and awareness materials	Risk resource	November – December 2020	February - March 2021	
b) Develop internal communications launching the risk framework	HoAA / Internal Comms	December 2020	February 2021	
c) Launch risk management framework	CEMT	January 2021	February 2021	

d) Roll out training and awareness activities	Risk resource	January 2021 – March 2021	March 2021	
4. Corporate Risk Register				
a) Quarterly update of [existing] Corporate Risk Register	SLT/CEMT	November 2020		Complete
b) Quarterly review of Corporate Risk Register	Audit Committee	20 November 2020		Complete
c) Move Corporate Risk Register to new risk management framework	SLT/CEMT/Internal Audit	March 2021		
5. Develop risk registers				
a) SLT Risk workshop	Risk resource	December 2020	February 2021	
b) Directorate risk workshops	Risk resource	January – March 2021	February – May 2021	

APPENDIX B – GMFRS Strategic Risk Update – November 2020

DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Date: 25th November 2020

Subject: GMFRS Strategic Risks

Report of: Sarah Scoales, Head of Service Excellence

PURPOSE

1. This briefing note is to address questions raised at Audit Committee on the 20th November and provide additional clarity on the two GMFRS risks, which have been escalated as strategic risks to the GMCA Risk Register.

CONTACT OFFICERS

2. Sarah Scoales, Head of Service Excellence – scoales@manchesterfire.gov.uk - 07807 076368

BACKGROUND

3. As part of the review and introduction of new Governance Arrangements it was agreed that all risks on the GMFRS Corporate Risk Register would be reviewed, and key risks considered high priority, due to the risk score, were approved for escalation onto the GMCA Strategic Risk Register, providing visibility and transparency.
4. There two risks raised for additional clarity were:
 - a. **CA11: GMFRS - MTA Response (Marauding Terrorist Attack)** - Due to ongoing national differences between the Fire Brigade Union and the Fire and Rescue Service employers regarding whether this is part of the Firefighters role map, there has been concerns raised regarding GMFRS's capability to deal with such incidents, including specific feedback as part of the HMICFRS Inspection. Specifically, these differences have affected Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service's (GMFRS) ability to carry out practical training either as a single service, or as part of a multi-agency response.
 - b. **CA13: GMFRS - Service Disruption** - Due to the impact of the pandemic on the organisation, there is a risk that we will be unable to provide an effective service delivery.

CURRENT POSITION

CA11: GMFRS - MTA Response (Marauding Terrorist Attack)

5. Since 7th February 2017, ongoing differences between the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) employers reduced GMFRS's ability to carry out practical training either as a single service, or as part of a multi-agency response in respect of an MTA event. As a direct result, GMFRS regrettably informed the Home Office on the 8th February 2019, that a full MTA Specialist Response Capability could no longer be provided.
6. On the 6th February 2020, GMFRS and the FBU submitted a joint application for the assistance of the National Joint Council (NJC) Secretaries on the matter in accordance with the NJC Model Consultation and Negotiation Procedures. A jointly agreed submission was subsequently provided to the Joint Secretaries on the 1st April 2020.
7. Notwithstanding challenges and delays resulting from the COVID-19 situation, a period of negotiation facilitated by the Joint Secretaries (JSs) has been underway to seek a local agreement to support the reintroduction of the capability.
8. This negotiation process has resulted in a number of draft agreements discussed in the strictest confidence, which as yet have proved not to be mutually acceptable.
9. The 16th July 2020 marked the first opportunity provided by the JSs for a bi-partite meeting to include both employer and employee representatives and their respective JS. The meeting was mutually positive in intent.
10. Progress has been made across number of areas of conflict. Although no element is to be considered approved until the agreement in its entirety is signed by both parties.
11. GMFRS remains committed to seeking a mutually agreed resolution to this matter and remain in process with the NJC JSs and, with authorisation, progress negotiations to reach an agreed resolution.
12. In preparation and anticipation of progress being made to reach a resolution, GMFRS's Contingency Planning Unit (CPU) have undertaken work to ready the equipment and vehicles currently in storage, and have scoped training requirements to reintroduce the MTA arrangements as part of a wider multi-agency specialist response capability.

CA13: GMFRS - Service Disruption (Due to Covid-19 Pandemic)

13. Since the start of the pandemic and the constantly developing situation, GMFRS have been trying to balance how we keep households safe from fire, whilst limiting the exposure of our operational and support staff to the public and / or the virus.
14. We enacted our business continuity plans to ensure we are able to maintain a level of service that fulfils all our critical functions, and as we work through this unprecedented situation, we have continued to adapt, implementing alternative ways of working.
15. In line with our business continuity plans, and to support our approach we have developed two documents that clarified how we would deliver our services and adapt as the situation changes, these are the **COVID-19 Strategy** and **COVID-19 Response Plan**.
16. In addition to these key documents, there has been a significant amount of activities undertaken to ensure that we effectively mitigate the potential impact of this risk and ensure our ability to continue to meet our statutory duties and respond to the need of the GM communities. The list below covers some of the key work undertaken:
 - a. Production of a Managers Handbook to support managers in the day-to-day management of activities and personnel during the pandemic. This document has been updated regularly during the pandemic to reflect changes in Government guidance and organisational guidance.
 - b. Regular comms has been ongoing throughout the pandemic, with key messages to all staff from CFO & CEO to ensure the reinforcement internal policies, procedures and government guidelines. Safety and Operational Alerts are being utilised to communicate with frontline firefighters around key messages.
 - c. From 16th March, staff were encouraged staff to work from home, where able. To support this Microsoft Teams was rolled out across the organisation to enable staff to work from home and limiting the number of non-frontline staff going into offices / stations. Where required, additional ICT equipment has been provided to support home working.
 - d. A dedicated page created on intranet as a one-stop shop for all Health & Wellbeing information.
 - e. The degradation policy has been and is continually being reviewed in line with the changing situation in terms of reducing the number of appliances that we may have available at any one time, this is being reviewed in lines with incident data in order to ensure we can maximise operational availability at peak times.
 - f. Guidance regarding cleaning arrangements has been put in place across the GMFRS estate, along with revised cleaning routines in high traffic areas and new arrangements

implemented across stations. All the relevant cleaning equipment and products are being made available to all staff.

- g. Measures were put in place to protect those members of staff with underlying health conditions or from certain Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, such as alternative delivery methods for prevention staff combined with other preventative methods.
- h. Interim overtime arrangements have been reintroduced in order to bolster operational staff shortages.
- i. Operational crewing bubbles have been introduced to keep more appliances on the run, enabling us to restrict the number of detachments / movement and further protect operational frontline staff.
- j. ER Hub are working on some alternative shift patterns for operational staff and FDS officers in order to provide a more flexible agile workforce.

17. A full governance structure was put in place to support internal BCM arrangements from a strategic and tactical level, and coordinate activities from external groups. The governance arrangements ensured all internal activities were being effectively coordinated through a number of internal working groups.

18. To ensure all Covid-19 related risks are captured and monitored, a specific Covid-19 risk register was implemented and is regularly reviewed at Strategic and Tactical BCM meetings to ensure that all risks are captured at mitigated appropriately.