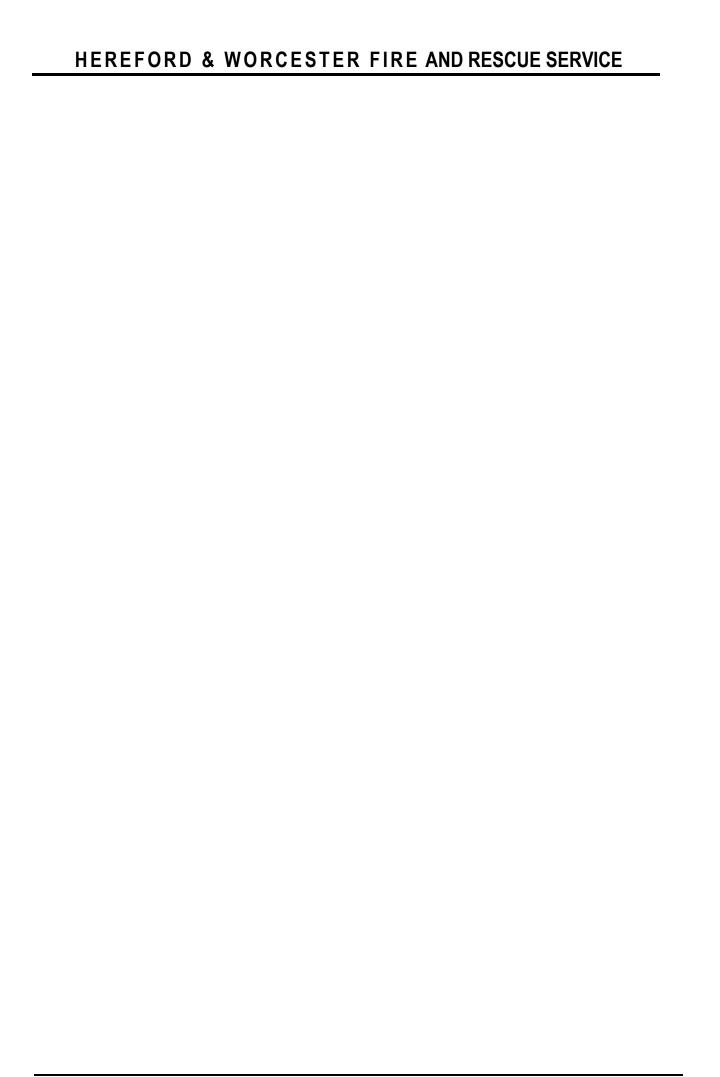# HEREFORD & WORCESTER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – RISK MANAGEMENT

Policy, Project, Activity: (e.g. SPI, SMB or FRA Paper, etc).	**Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub Station Silverwoods Park**	**New/Existing?** (If existing, please state which document it will replace)	New project
		Date:	16-06-2016
Directorate:	Service Delivery	**Organisation:**	Community Risk & Training
Author:	Mark Preece	**Head of Department**	Mark Preece
Title:	**Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub Station – Silverwoods Park**		
Purpose:	*Please use the Executive Summary information from the SPI to complete this section, members of the public as well as staff will read this form.*		

Through a one-off award of £2.38 million capital funding from the government, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority has the opportunity to create a Joint Emergency Services Hub Station for the Wyre Forest. A hub station is a central base for a number of different services, where they can work together more effectively for the benefit of the local area.

The Fire Authority believes that a central hub station would have important advantages in terms of bringing together on one site resources of the fire and police 'blue light' services with other voluntary sector emergency support services, while helping to share costs, local intelligence and training facilities. Instead of being in different locations across the Wyre Forest area, some parts of the services would come together on a single site, not to merge their organisations, but to co-operate more closely and effectively.

The key aim is to develop existing relationships between emergency service partners to improve their joint working for both routine and major incidents – an aspiration that fits very well with the government's 'blue light agenda' which encourages fire, police and ambulance services to co-operate to make the best use of their resources. The project is a significant example of the Authority's commitment to fulfilling the aims of the Policing and Crime Bill currently progressing through Parliament, which proposes a statutory duty on emergency services to collaborate.

In this context, the proposal will create a Joint Emergency Services Hub Station for Wyre Forest by relocating the current Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport fire stations and their resources onto a single site in the Wyre Forest area.

Following extensive public consultation, the Fire Authority requested a detailed investigation of potential sites suitable for development of the Hub Station. This investigation is now complete and a plot at Silverwoods Park mixed use development site on the Stourport Road to the south of Kidderminster has been identified as the most appropriate location for the Hub Station.

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Strategic Policy Implications	Yes / No
Does this policy/activity help us to deliver our CRMP and Corporate Objectives?	**Yes**

If yes, please state how, if No please state why the document should be put in place.

The Hub Station would contribute to many community safety initiatives and improve the effectiveness of their delivery. There has been provisional agreement with partners that the Hub would become the operational base for the following emergency services in Wyre Forest:

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service – for the Wyre Forest wholetime and on-call fire engines, crew training and community safety.

West Mercia Police – to accommodate West Mercia Police Community Support Officers (Kidderminster police station would remain to accommodate other Wyre Forest policing functions).

Severn Area Rescue Association – facilities for specialist water rescue equipment and training for volunteers.

British Red Cross – facilities for its vehicles, training, victim support and community engagement.

Other organisations – there would also be opportunities for other voluntary and community organisations to use the hub station for meetings and training, and where appropriate to enhance their links with the emergency services.

The Hub Station would also be a focus for the community – a centre where the emergency services would work together, and with voluntary organisations and volunteers, to improve community safety across the Wyre Forest area.

Therefore, for all the services in question and for the Fire and Rescue Service in particular, the Hub Station would strengthen the organisation and enhance the delivery of the primary CRMP objectives: prevention, protection, response and resilience services.

Equality and Diversity Outcomes	Yes / No
Are there any equality and diversity outcomes for this policy/activity?	**Yes**

If Yes, please outline i.e. Home Fire Safety Check Policy will have objectives for the targeting of vulnerable groups which link to the Equality strands becoming objectives.

Groups more likely to be at risk of fire are, *for example*, frail, elderly and disabled people (especially if they live alone), socially and economically disadvantaged people in social or private rented accommodation, some ethnic minority and migrant worker groups (especially if they live in over-crowded or multiple occupation dwellings), and heavy smokers. There is no evidence that the development of a Hub Station would differentially and adversely affect those with protected characteristics or any other vulnerable groups at higher risk of fire and other emergencies.

Indeed, insofar as the Fire and Rescue Service targets its prevention and protection programmes towards individuals and groups known to be more at risk of fire and other life-threatening emergencies, a Hub Station should enhance those initiatives. For example, working in the same building alongside West Mercia Police will help to stimulate:

- better day-to-day communications between the two emergency services and their voluntary sector partners,
- sharing of local intelligence about vulnerable people,

- greater co-operation in tackling anti-social behaviour such as malicious false alarms, deliberate fire setting, vandalism and malicious damage, and reckless driving,
- more capacity for crime and fire prevention campaigns,
- greater use of facilities and space for voluntary sector partners to use for their meetings.

The co-location of the Severn Area Rescue Association and the British Red Cross would also have benefits for vulnerable members of the community. For example, being based in the same building will help to provide opportunities for:

- a more co-ordinated role alongside the emergency services in dealing with exceptional incidents like flooding and similar emergencies,
- shared experience in victim support, care of the injured and vulnerable, and community engagement,
- some administrative, clerical and office support.

The Hub Station will also facilitate good working relationships between the statutory and voluntary sectors, which would be strengthened by greater sharing of resources; volunteers would get valuable experience; their organisations would gain even greater resilience; and the emergency services would build closer links with their communities. In addition, there would be secure storage and maintenance services for specialist equipment and vehicles, regular training for volunteers and a realistic experience in operational settings alongside the emergency services.

Moreover, the creation of the Hub Station would overcome the equality and diversity disadvantages of the current three stations. For example:

Kidderminster fire station's site is too small to develop a modern community fire station with space for partners and community facilities.

Bewdley and **Stourport** fire stations have very limited training facilities in which to practise tackling the risks and scenarios crews encounter at incidents.

Bewdley and **Stourport** also lack suitable facilities for women firefighters and visitors to the sites.

All three stations provide very limited access for disabled and special needs visitors.

It is neither cost-effective nor physically feasible to address these issues properly at the existing stations, but a purpose-built Hub station on a larger site would be able to meet all these requirements.

Equality Monitoring	Yes / No
Does the Service currently collate data specific to this activity for equality monitoring?	**Yes**

The Service regularly monitors and assesses its estate in terms of general condition and suitability in respect of equality and diversity issues.

It also routinely monitors those and other matters in relation to its emergency incidents, particularly by using "After the Incident" survey questionnaires which are distributed to all households experiencing emergency incidents. The Service also carries out 'quick strike' targeting of households in neighbouring properties with fire safety leaflets and home fire safety

advice.

The Service also carries out other forms of routine monitoring in term of quarterly performance reports to the Fire Authority as well as an Annual Report.

The formal, qualitative and quantitative consultation about the proposal for a Hub Station with the public, staff and stakeholders across Wyre Forest included a widely available consultation questionnaire asked specifically about human rights, vulnerable groups, and those with protected characteristics.

Partnership Working	Yes / No
Does this policy/ activity involve working or interaction with other organisations?	**Yes**

If yes, please ensure that the Partnership Working SPI has been completed and advice sought from the Partnership Officer

An essential feature of the Hub Station is the creation of opportunities to enhance partnerships with other statutory and voluntary sector emergency services. The Hub Station would be a focus for community safety: a centre where the emergency services could work together and with voluntary organisations and volunteers to improve community safety across the Wyre Forest area.

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service wishes to improve its partnerships in order to work more effectively with other organisations to serve the public and to target those people and areas most at risk of fire and other emergencies.

Log No.

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Risk Management

Please complete all fields identifying the risk/ impact of your subject area.

The Risk Score is derived from the level of Impact and the Likelihood, calculated from the Strategic Risk Matrix – please see below. The risk matrix provides a score based upon the impact (low, medium or high effect) that this risk could have upon the Fire Authority and the likelihood (low, medium or high) that this risk could actually happen during the application of the policy, decision or project.

Completion of this form ensures that all relevant corporate considerations have been addressed that may impact upon the Authority. Any residual risk scores of 7, 8 and 9 (the red areas) must be escalated to the Risk Management for consideration into appropriate Risk Registers. Where the answer is no, the inherent and residual risk score will be **N/A**.

Risk Areas Identified (Risk impact or concerns arising from the subject area being adopted)	Inherent Risk Score (before any control measures applied)	Control Measures/Solution (What action has or will be taken to reduce the inherent risk score and who is responsible?)	Residual Risk Score (after control measures are applied to mitigate inherent risk scores)
1. Does this activity/policy involve or have an impact on these groups? If yes, please indicate: with a (✓) and state which group(s) Public ✓ Staff ✓ Partners ✓ Contractors Consultants Community Groups ✓ Local Government ✓ Local Resilience Forum			
From the groups identified above, state here what the actual risk is to the Authority			
Public Overall, it is likely that the public across Wyre Forest would benefit from the Hub Station and the associated enhanced partnership working, particularly in terms of prevention and protection initiatives and increased intelligence and collaboration. However, it is likely that average response times to incidents in some areas may be longer than at present, while for other areas response times may be shorter.	4	**Public** The Service has undertaken extensive risk analysis to inform its professional judgement about the merits of a Hub Station and the likely effect on response times of potential locations. It accepts that a Hub Station based at Silverwoods Park will mean that in some areas fire engines will take longer to arrive. However, there are important mitigating factors that offset this consideration: • The first fire engine sent to incidents will always be the nearest and most appropriate one, given the circumstances of the incident. • The location of the Hub Station allows for the	2

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		recruitment and retention of a large 'pool' of on-call firefighters, thus improving the availability and resilience of emergency cover. • Any additional risks attributable to longer response times in some areas can be mitigated by targeting increased prevention and protection initiatives in the relevant communities and neighbourhoods. The targeted approach will also be facilitated by closer joint working brought about by the development of the Hub Station. • On those occasions when simultaneous incidents occur, and when crews may already be deployed at an incident for a prolonged period of time, Fire Control have the discretion to call in other crews to provide immediate response standby cover as required. • Co-location at the Hub Station should also facilitate enhanced joint prevention and protection campaigns in the relevant areas.	
Staff The Hub Station requires a large 'pool' of on-call firefighters, but it is likely that not all the current on-call firefighters would be able to attend the new station within five minutes. In these circumstances, affected members of staff may decide they are unable to continue their employment with the Fire and Rescue Service. **Partners, Community Groups and Local Government** The success of the Hub Station depends upon the Fire Service working more closely, effectively and harmoniously	**3**	**Staff** The Service has appropriate procedures in place to manage any personnel issues arising from the proposal, including the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC). However, it is not envisaged that there would be any compulsory redundancies. **Partners, Community Groups and Local Government** The Service recognises the importance of effective partnership working and will put in place management	**2**

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with its statutory and voluntary sector partners in order to: • Make adequate and fair funding and management arrangements for the shared site. • Develop new shared initiatives while also enhancing existing relationships. • Demonstrate to the public that blue light collaboration benefits communities while also raising the profile of community safety in all its dimensions.	**4**	systems and monitoring procedures to achieve its goals. The success of the Hub Station depends upon the Service working more closely, effectively and harmoniously with its statutory and voluntary sector partner in order to share costs, and design and manage joint community safety and operational initiatives. Joint working and collaboration by all partners to achieve common goals is embedded as a fundamental aim of the scheme.	**1**

Equality & Diversity

1. Does this subject area impact upon the 9 protected characteristics? If yes, please indicate: Race Gender Reassignment Disability Age Sexual Orientation Religion & Belief Pregnancy & Maternity Marriage & Civil Partnership Sex			
From the groups identified above, state here what the actual risk is to the Authority. There is no evidence that the Hub Station would have any disproportionately adverse impacts on any groups with protected characteristics. Nevertheless, the Service is fully aware that some people, because of their personal circumstances, are likely to be at greater risk of fire and other life-risk emergencies, including some elderly and disabled people.	**2**	The Service targets its prevention and protection activities towards the most vulnerable and at-risk people; and multiple factors are taken into account in the targeting because combinations of factors increase risk (including levels of deprivation). Simply being elderly or disabled does not increase fire risk, but being elderly *and* disabled *and* living alone *and* smoking *and* being poor does so. The Service's community risk planning takes into account the population and households in all local neighbourhoods and uses Census analysis, the Index of Multiple Deprivation, Mosaic lifestyle characteristics and the incidence of fire and road traffic collisions (and any associated injuries and fatalities) within those areas to help determine relative levels of risk across the whole Service area.	**1**

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2. Could this activity prevent us promoting equality for any diverse group? **No**			
If yes, please identify how and what the risk is here.	**NA**		**NA**
3. Could this activity potentially discourage the participation of any equality groups? **Yes**			
If yes, please identify how and what the risk is here. The Hub Station would replace three existing fire stations in Wyre Forest with one multi-service centre. Depending on the location of the Hub, this may lead to some current members of staff deciding they are unable to continue their employment with the Fire and Rescue Service. While this may affect some parts of the Wyre Forest area, it is unlikely to impact differentially on any equality groups.	**2**	If additional on-call firefighters are required for the Hub Station, the Service will continue to develop innovative campaigns to encourage the recruitment of a more diverse workforce.	**1**
4. Could this activity promote negative attitudes towards any equality groups? **No**			
If yes, please identify how and what the risk is here.	**NA**		**NA**
5. Could this activity help to promote equality of opportunity between diverse groups? **Yes**			
If no, please identify why and what the risk is here. There is some scope for initiatives to promote equality of opportunity by positive action and recruitment campaigns.	**2**	Recruitment of additional on-call firefighters and volunteer activities at the hub Station would provide opportunities to promote equality of opportunity by positive action and recruitment campaigns.	**1**

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6. Is there any public concern that the function or policy is being carried out in a discriminatory way? **No**			
If yes, please identify how and what the risk is here.	**NA**		**NA**
7. Has consultation internally/externally been completed with all groups affected? **Yes**			
If yes, please provide details and risk score appropriately. If no, please provide details and risk score appropriately. Following a series of listening and engagement sessions with staff and members of the public, a 12-week programme of public meetings, stakeholder forums and a formal public consultation exercise on the principle of the Hub Station was carried out between September and November 2015. The public consultation included using different methods to ensure members of the public in affected areas were given opportunities to take part, including local meetings and a forum of randomly selected members of the public. The consultation questionnaire also included specific sections on human rights and protected characteristics.	**2**	The Service is confident that its preliminary and formal consultation procedures were proportionate, thorough and inclusive. The whole consultation process was conducted by a specialist social research organisation, which ensured independence and impartiality throughout.	**1**
8. Can the Service be sure that the policy/ activity is meeting all of the needs of all of these groups? **Yes**			
If no, please identify what needs are not being met.	**NA**		**NA**
Strategic Policy/Governance Implications – e.g. Political impact, Leadership, or senior management change			
Relocating three existing fire stations into a single Hub Station is a significant, strategic consideration, which requires detailed analysis, public engagement and political deliberation.	**7**	In making their decision, the Fire Authority will need to be assured that the location of the new Hub Station is appropriate, taking into account the need to balance risk against resources, both operational and financial, and the concerns of local communities affected.	**5**

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Of particular concern during the consultation process was the potential impact on response times following relocation of the existing three fire stations. There are organisational and governance challenges in bringing together 'blue light' services and voluntary sector emergency support services at the same location.		A detailed assessment of the potential impact on response times was undertaken by independent data analysts, and their findings were taken into consideration in recommending Silverwoods Park as the preferred location for the Hub Station. The Fire Authority will pay careful attention to the findings in making their decision. The Fire Authority and Service recognise the importance of effective partnership working and will put in place management systems and monitoring procedures to achieve their goals. This is of particular significance following the Government's commitment to ensuring greater collaboration between emergency services.	

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Operational – e.g. how we carry out our duties			
Combining operational resources at a single location is likely to lead to some rebalancing in the proportion of incidents attended by wholetime and on-call firefighters. Additional on-call firefighter recruitment may be necessary to enlarge the overall pool of on-call firefighters. The creation of a single Hub Station at Silverwoods Park will increase response times to some areas of the Wyre Forest area.	2	The availability of on-call crews will continue to be monitored by the Service. With the provision of a Hub Station, the Wyre Forest area would be receiving an immediate, full-time, 24/7 response service, as opposed to the current provision of on-call services in the Bewdley and Stourport areas, which can be affected by the availability of on-call staff at different times of the day or night. The modelled assessment shows that the proportion of emergency calls responded to by wholetime firefighters is likely to increase, subject to normal risk assessment protocols. The provision of fire cover is continually assessed and reviewed to ensure risks are balanced against operational resources as far as possible. In those areas where response times may potentially be longer than at present, among other mitigation measures the level of community and business safety activity could be increased, particularly focusing on the more vulnerable members of the community. Overall, the creation of a single Hub Station is considered to be an appropriate response to the large fall in the numbers of emergency incidents across Herefordshire and Worcestershire in general and in Wyre Forest. The three current stations are also less than four miles apart and in total they consistently attend fewer incidents each year than the single station at Worcester.	1

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Legal – eg change or failure to comply with legislation including specialist advice			
The Fire Authority is legally responsible for the provision of fire and rescue services under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.	3	The Fire Authority will continue to hold the Chief Fire Officer to account for the delivery of fire and rescue services.	1
Financial – eg monetary or resource implications			
The Authority faces continuing reductions in central government funding and has to make savings in all areas of the Service, including frontline service delivery.	5	While the need to make savings cannot be ignored, the provision of a Wyre Forest Hub Station is not driven primarily by financial considerations, and is seen as a potential service improvement in the light of changing risks and resource levels. The Hub Station will also benefit from £2.38 million of capital funding from the government while avoiding recurrent maintenance, refurbishment and upgrading costs for the three current fire stations.	3
Reputational – eg Will the reputation of the service be put at risk by the adoption of this policy/ activity?			
There is a risk to the Authority's reputation if people in some areas of Wyre Forest feel critical of longer response times that could occur in those areas following the relocation of emergency cover into the single Hub Station.	4	The Authority appreciates that any reduction in the number of fire stations and any consequent increase in response times will be matters of concern. However, such decisions are not taken lightly and require extensive risk analysis and professional judgement in order to ensure that fire cover is balanced most effectively and efficiently across the whole Service area. With the development of a Hub Station at Silverwoods Park, there is a recognition that emergency cover may safely be rebalanced in order to match more closely current risk levels, in the light of the substantial reductions in risk and incident numbers over the last 10 years. The Service will continue to promote its fire safety education	2

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		and other prevention work, targeting its activities towards the most vulnerable members of the community.	
Environmental – Is there any impact including Sustainability – eg Energy saving, waste disposal, decontamination and containment of fire-fighting media.			
Please ensure that the Sustainability Impact Appraisal form has been completed and advice sought from the Head of Asset Management Relocating three older fire stations into one purpose-built Hub Station will allow for the use of greener and more efficient technologies to reduce energy consumption.	**2**	Environmental issues will be a key consideration in designing, building and operating the Hub Station.	**1**
Assets – Procurement/ ICT/Property/Fleet/Equipment – eg Purchasing, New builds, Maintenance/Alterations			
By creating the Hub Station, the Authority will benefit from a one-off opportunity for capital funding of £2.38 million from the government – money that is not available for any other purpose – and also from the sale of the current three sites. There may also be savings in running costs deriving from sharing the new site with the other emergency services.	**2**	The government funding has been secured for the development of the Hub Station and there is provisional agreement with the other emergency services to share the site.	**1**
Human Resources – eg Recruitment, Policy changes, Monitoring information Establishment changes, Employee Relations, Employee Development			
The Service recognises that some current on-call firefighters may not be able to meet the five minute turn-in requirement at the new Hub Station. It also recognises that there may be some local resistance to the closure of each current fire station.	**5**	The Service will continue to work closely with staff representative bodies through the Joint Consultative Committee. A large pool of on-call firefighters will be required at the new Hub Station and so recruitment of on-call employees will continue, using innovative campaigns to attract a diversity of staff.	**3**
Training – eg Is training required in this area? Will Training & Development need to be notified in order for them to assist in the delivery training in this area?			
Training routines and facilities will need to be maintained and if possible improved.	**2**	The Hub Station would have more space and more facilities for fire and rescue service training, and also for exercises	**1**

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		with the other emergency services in respect of training for both routine and exceptional incidents**.**	
Health and Safety – eg Will this enhance or undermine Health, Safety and wellbeing			
Safe systems of working will need to be in place.	**2**	The Hub Station would provide for and encourage more effective collaboration between wholetime and on-call firefighters, with more co-ordinated training on a single site. Existing policies and procedures will be reinforced and where necessary new protocols will be developed for fire and rescue service training and for training in association with the other services on the site.	**1**
Partnership – eg Working or interaction with other organisations			
The success of the Hub Station depends on effective partnership working with other emergency services and with voluntary support services.	**2**	The Authority is aware of the need to promote effective partnerships on the shared site and will ensure that policies are in place to promote and monitor their effectiveness.	**1**
Information Management – eg Data Quality, Privacy Impact Assessment, Data Protection and Freedom of Information, Environmental Regulation			
Does this policy/activity conform to the Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act, Environmental Information Regulations and Data Quality principles? The creation of the Hub Station does not carry inherent data management risks, except insofar as the different services will need to share data about, for example, community risks, vulnerable people and potential anti-social or perhaps more serious potential offenders. The sharing of such data must be fully compliant with the relevant legislation.	**4**	The Authority recognises the important of these issues and will ensure that appropriate protocols are in place to regulate data management and sharing at the Hub Station and elsewhere.	**3**

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Total Inherent Score	59	Total Residual Score	32

Outcome	Yes / No
Does this Policy/Project/Activity reduce the overall risk for the service? *If no, please state why there is not a reduction in risk*	**Yes**

High	Important risks - may potentially affect provision of key services or duties 6	Key risk- may potentially affect provision of key services or duties 8	Immediate action needed - serious threat to provision and/or achievement of key services or duties 9
Impact	Monitor as necessary - less important but still could have a serious effect on the provision of key services or duties 3	Monitor as necessary - less important but still could have a serious effect on the provision of key services or duties 5	Key risks - may potentially affect provision of key services or duties 7
low	No action necessary 1	Monitor as necessary - ensure being properly managed 2	Monitor as necessary- less important but still could have a serious effect on the provision of key services or duties 4
	Low	Likelihood	High

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Opportunities:	Responsible:
What further Opportunities can be identified from this activity/policy matter? Not applicable	*Who is responsible for delivery?* Not applicable

Publishing the Document:
Is there any reason why this policy, SMB paper or FRA report and accompanying Business Impact Analysis should not be published?   *Please consider Data Protection, Privacy Impact Assessment and Freedom Of Information concerns.*   *If there is a reason why this information can not be published, please state why.*   None

Policy Author Signature	*Signature on original copy*	Date	16-06-2016
Head of Department/Mgr		Date	16-06-2016

TO BE COMPLETED BY SERVICE SUPPORT DIRECTORATE ONLY:	
Escalation of Risk:	Yes / No
Please identify the escalation of risk e.g. Departmental or Strategic Risk Register, Equality and Diversity Advisory Group or relevant Corporate Risk Consideration Lead e.g. Training, Partnership	

Authorisation:	Outcome:	Date:

Senior HR Advisor - Equality & Diversity Lead		
Group Commander		

SMB AND FRA PAPERS ONLY:	
SMB:	
FRA:	
Programme Support:	
Procurement:	
Sustainability impact appraisal completed	