NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

20 March 2017

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE

Report by Richard Fairhead, Assistant Chief Fire Officer

Purpose of Report

1.   To advise Members of developing issues in respect of the National Joint Council for Local Authorities Fire Brigades (NJC) workstreams in support of more diverse activities for firefighters.

Background

2.   Members will be aware that, some 18 months ago, the NJC initiated a number of workstreams aimed at diversifying the role of the firefighter. A key workstream is the provision of emergency medical response (EMR) or co-responding with the ambulance service to certain categories of medical emergency. The North Wales Fire and Rescue Service agreed to take part in a national trial of EMR. The trial commenced in the autumn of 2015 and ran until 28 February 2017.

Information

3.   In June 2016, the NJC commissioned researchers led by Professor Julia Williams from the University of Hertfordshire to evaluate the co-responding work carried out since 2015, including data from those involved in the trials and from other fire authorities undertaking this type of work.

4.   Following this evaluation a report has been produced (see appendix 1) which was published on the 28 February 2017. Currently the contents of the report and the findings are being analysed by the NJC.

5.   The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) is planning to discuss its approach to co-responding at a conference on 21 March 2017. It is expected that there will be greater clarity on the future of this and the other workstreams following the conference.

6.   Notwithstanding that the formal trial period has now finished, members will wish to be aware that the stations involved in the trial in North Wales are continuing to provide EMR services on an interim basis.

Recommendation

7   That Members

(i)   note the developing national situation;

(ii)   recognise that local arrangements continue on an interim basis but may be affected by the outcome of the FBU recall conference on 21 March 2017.