

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

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| MEETING OF THE: | COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE | | |
| DATE: | 30 JULY 2015 | REPORT NO: | CFO/067/15 |
| PRESENTING OFFICER | DCFO PHIL GARRIGAN | | |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: | GM GUY KEEN | REPORT AUTHOR: | SM STEVE TAYLOR |
| OFFICERS CONSULTED: | COMMUNITY PROTECTION MFRA LEGAL DEPARTMENT | | |
| TITLE OF REPORT: | PRIMARY AUTHORITY SCHEME 2015 | | |

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| APPENDICES: | NONE |
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Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the formalisation of partnership arrangements enacted under the Primary Authority Scheme (PAS) with two retail organisations, A.S.Watson (Superdrug PLC, Savers Health & Beauty, The Perfume Shop), and Ladbrokes Gaming PLC.

Recommendation

2. That Members;
 - a. Note and understand the advantages to MFRA of entering into these partnerships.
 - b. Note that following the general election, the new government have already stated that it is a key business objective to extend the existing PAS to include smaller businesses.
 - c. Approve the principal of seeking additional partnership agreements with other organisations within the retail sector.

Introduction and Background

3. In 2011, CFOA supported by the British Retail Consortium (BRC) introduced the Retail and Fire Key Authority Partnership (RAFKAP) with the objectives of promoting and improving statutory compliance within the retail sector with fire regulations, and creating consistency in approach within FRA's for enforcement of the regulations.
4. This scheme was then extended, administered, and re-named to Primary Authority Scheme (PAS) in late 2013 by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO).
5. Under PAS, MFRA were nominated for 2 compulsory pilot partnerships with Superdrug PLC, and Ladbrokes PLC, which ran for 6 months.

6. During this period, both companies were provided with 'assured advice' by officers of MFRS Community Protection department on improving their company fire safety policies and procedures. The pilot partnership arrangements successfully concluded in June 2014.
7. In October 2014, A.S.Watson, who are the parent company of Superdrug, Savers Health & Beauty, and The Perfume Shops, officially requested the formulation of a full partnership agreement with MFRA for entry on to the PAS public register, covering approximately 1500 retail outlets in the UK.
8. This was followed by a similar request by Ladbrokes PLC earlier this year for their 2200 premises in the UK.
9. Following discussions, formal application was made to BRDO for partnership agreements with both companies, and these were officially nominated by the Secretary of State and entered onto the public register in April 2015.

Equality and Diversity Implications

10. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Staff Implications

11. At present, Community Protection have nominated 2 appropriately experienced and qualified Fire Engineers as contact officers for these partnerships, which is the statutory minimum number of contact officers required under PAS.
12. Each partnership is contracted for 120 hours input per year, and will run for a period of 2 years.
13. Costs are recovered by MFRA at an agreed rate of £65 per hour.
14. Increasing the number of partnership agreements may require the nomination of further appropriately trained officers, but this may be off-set against the cost recovery arrangements.

Legal Implications

15. There is a risk of reputational damage to MFRA if incorrect advice is issued, or inappropriate actions are undertaken by MFRS in the administration of the PAS.
16. Further legal or financial implications will be mitigated within the terms of the partnership agreements drawn up and agreed between the legal departments of MFRA and the individual partner organisations.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

17. PAS cannot be used to generate income, but legitimate costs for officer's time can be recovered from both retail partners.

18. PAS is therefore cost neutral to MFRA, and further expansion of these partnerships can be covered as long as there are appropriately trained officers available to administer the arrangements.
19. Given the agreed rate of cost recovery, approximate annual salary costs for 1 officer could be recovered from 4 partnerships.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

20. The existing H&S and Lone working policy has been applied where appropriate

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

21. The PAS is linked to the strategic aims of MFRA in that it promotes good fire safety practices in retail premises which should contribute significantly to reducing incidents of fire in such premises.
22. Ensuring good fire safety standards in these premises will also contribute to safer buildings for the occupation of the public, and should allow for effective intervention from fire crews, in the event of a fire.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/096/12 Introduction of RAFKAP

CFO/118/13 Pilot Scheme Update

CFO/026/14 Extension to PAS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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| MFRA | Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority. |
| MFRS | Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service. |
| PAS | Primary Authority Scheme is the name for the partnership arrangement between Fire Authorities and Retail Organisations for issuing assured advice on fire safety policies and procedures. |
| BRDO | Better Regulation Delivery Office |
| CFOA | Chief Fire Officers Association |
| RAFKAP | Retail and Fire Key Authority Partnership |
| BRC | British Retail Consortium |