

**AGENDA ITEM:**

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE &amp; RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> December 2011</b>
<b>REPORT NO.</b>	<b>CFO/ 153 /11</b>
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	<b>DCFO</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Director of Strategic Planning Deb Appleton 296 4404</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>Jeff Edwards Programme &amp; Projects Manager</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>MFRA Business Continuity Plan</b>

<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Business Continuity Management Plan</b>
	<b>B</b>		<b>SMG Contact details for BCP</b>
	<b>C</b>		<b>Equality Initial Assessment</b>

**ATTACHED – HARD COPY**

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members consider and approve the recommendations of this report relating to a reviewed and updated MFRA Business Continuity Plan.

Recommendation

2. That Members;
  - a) Consider and approve the renewed and updated Business Continuity Plan.

Introduction & Background

3. Business Continuity and the development of up to date plans for the identification of key skills, fallback locations, minimum staffing levels and contact details for each Directorate/Department is essential in ensuring that MFRS is able to provide its core functions both during and following any major business interruption.
4. It is good practice to review Business Continuity Plans regularly (at least annually and whenever there has been a significant change), and following recent organisational risk changes, the overarching MFRA plan has been reviewed and updated and is presented as Appendix A for consideration.
5. Previously MFRA has stored its Directorate/Department Business Continuity plans on Public folders; however with the advent of the MFRA Portal, these plans have been migrated onto this medium. This affords greater flexibility in the management and viewing of said plans. Directorate/Departmental Business Continuity Plans are

available on the Portal to those with access to those with access to the network via the internet. Hard copies are issued to SMG and Heads of Department.

6. Individual Directorates/Departments plans also require reviewing and updating and SMG have reviewed their respective Business Continuity Plans with reference to the recent Organisational changes within MFRA.
7. A revised Business Continuity Management Document and Strategic Management Group contact details sheet will be re-issued following collection of all updated Business Continuity Plans attached as Appendices A & B.
8. The need to exercise business continuity plans for an organisation is fundamental in preparing its staff for the eventuality of a major business interruption. It allows Managers to experience at first hand the decision making processes involved in providing core services whilst experiencing a major business interruption event.
9. To that end MFRA will test its business continuity plan, at least annually. Members are advised that the Strategic Planning Directorate and Operational Preparedness are to liaise to facilitate such an event, on a date to be agreed. It is hoped that this will be an exercise which will also test our health and safety plans. Outcomes will be reported back to Members in due course.

#### Equality & Diversity Implications

- 10 A renewed Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for the Business Continuity Plan and is attached as Appendix C. In summary, the EIA found that some groups of staff could be differently affected by a business continuity event but concluded that,

“The BCP plans are designed to cater for all MFRA employees and the revision and renewal of all Organisational/Department plans will highlight any issues concerning the protected groups early and allow managers to instigate mitigation methods to reduce and remove and such obstacles”.

#### Staff Implications

- 11 Having current Business Continuity Plans in place will allow Directorates/Departments to identify areas that may possibly be considered as “single point of failure”, due to the prerequisite skill set of an individual or group, and to put into place measures to reduce or remove this through training or shared services
- 12 Minimum staffing levels are identified early, fall back locations are identified and recognised, and contact details addressed so as to ensure salient information is to hand.
- 13 Training has been provided for senior managers on BCP issues and arrangements for refresher training will be made available to further enhance this requirement.

## Legal Implications

- 14 MFRA has a duty as a Category One responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to have current Business Continuity Plans in place in the event of a major business interruption occurring. The testing of these and other plans will ensure that the Authority complies with all Health & Safety legislation and the Civil Contingencies Act.

## Financial Implications & Value for Money

- 15 The report has no initial cost, however members should note, that there may well be additional funding required if and when a major business interruption should occur. The Authority already has insurance cover for some potential business interruption events and recovery from those events, for example, fire and maintains reserves to hedge against risk.

## Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

- 16 The preparation and revision of Business Continuity Plans for MFRA Directorates/Departments allows MFRA to identify key staff and skills required to provide its core services during and post a major Business interruption.

## Contribution to **\*\*Our Mission – To Achieve; Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters\*\***

- 17 Having current Business Continuity Plans in place will enable MFRA to react in a predetermined manner in the event of a major Business interruption event and to continue to provide its core services, using the staffing models contained within each plan, to the people of Merseyside.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None for this report

### **\*Glossary of Terms**

MFRS = Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

BCP = Business Continuity Plan

SMG = Strategic Management Group