AGENDA ITEM:

MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

REPORT TO: ASSET MANAGEMENT & SHARED SERVICES

COMMITTEE

DATE: 10th December 2009

REPORT NO. CFO/254/09

REPORTING OFFICER: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

CONTACT OFFICER: KIERAN TIMMINS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF

RESOURCES, EXT. 4108

OFFICERS CONSULTED:

SUBJECT: MFRA POLICY RE AUTOMATIC FIRE SUPPRESSION

SYSTEMS

APPENDIX A TITLE AUTOMATIC FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS POLICY

ATTACHED - HARD COPY

Purpose of Report

1. To propose a policy on Automatic Fire Suppression Systems.

Recommendation

2. The policy attached as Appendix A be approved.

Introduction & Background

- 3. It is recognised that a highly effective way of reducing the impact of fires is through automatic fire suppression systems.
- 4. These types of systems include sprinklers and misting systems.
- 5. MFRA has long advocated the installation of sprinklers in building developments in Merseyside on a risk basis. In particular, it has campaigned to have sprinklers installed in new schools which are particularly high cost, high risk buildings.
- 6. MFRA has not had a formal policy on suppression systems for its own buildings. In practice, what it has done is the minimum required by statute.

- 7. The Authority has a large scale investment programme in bringing its building infrastructure up to scratch, including schemes like:
 - 7 new PFI stations
 - Kensington Fire Station
 - New workshops building/Engineering Centre of Excellence
 - Accommodation for Inshore Rescue
 - LLAR accommodation
- 8. It seems appropriate to develop a policy on suppression systems for its own buildings.
- 9. Suppression systems typically cost 1-2% of overall building costs if installed at construction time (this is about the same as flooring/carpets) reduce risks of loss and may bring savings in reduced insurance premiums.

Proposed Policy

- 10. It is considered that:
 - (1) Based upon the effectiveness of suppression systems
 - (2) In order to set an example and to provide community leadership in making Merseyside safer;

the Authority would wish to:

- Install suppression systems in all its new buildings.
- Actively seek to retrofit systems as part of maintenance and development works in current buildings, where it is cost effective to do so.

The policy at Appendix A summarises these proposals.

Equality & Diversity Implications

11. None arising out of this report.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

12. There will be a cost of installing suppression systems. The cost of a sprinkler system on a new building can be significant and is dependent on several factors such as local water pressure and size of the incoming water main, the need or otherwise of water storage tanks, the design and layout of the building i.e. overall floor area, number of floors, etc. The budget costs for installing a sprinkler in the main area of the new Vesty Workshop is circa £50,000. The cost of a sprinkler in the smaller Units 5A & B is around £15,000. The budget cost for a water misting system at Kensington Fire Station is £50,000. The cost to maintain a sprinkler installation is dependent on size and the maintenance regime.

- 13. Enquires have been made with our insurance company in relation to the new Vesty Workshops and we have been advised that they do not offer premium discounts on individual buildings that have sprinklers at this time. Reductions in insurance premiums for sprinkler installations are only available for large warehouse units storing valuables.
- 14. The Capital Programme is being reviewed with a view to containing the costs of installation within the current programme and not increasing Authority borrowing requirements.

Health & Safety and Environmental Implications

15. Suppression systems make our buildings and staff safer.

Contribution to Achieving the Vision:

"To Make Merseyside a Safer, Stronger, Healthier Community"

16. This policy will make our buildings and staff safer, and give leadership to the Merseyside community.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order 2005 Building Regulations – Part B Fire Safety NW Fire PFI Specification