

AGENDA ITEM:

REPORT TO:	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE:	TUESDAY 9TH APRIL 2013
REPORT NO.	CFO/038/13
REPORTING OFFICER:	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
CONTACT OFFICER:	DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING, DEB APPLETON, EXTN. 4402
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	AREA MANAGER PREVENTION AND PROTECTION, MYLES PLATT, EXTN. 4644
SUBJECT:	MERSEYSIDE BRUSSELS OFFICE (MBO) UPDATE

THERE ARE APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

APPENDIX	(A)	TITLE	MBO Policy Focus Update – March 2013
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ATTACHED – HARD COPY

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the latest developments with regards to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority's involvement with Merseyside Brussels Office (MBO).

Recommendation

2. That Members note the content of this report.

Introduction & Background

3. At the Authority meeting on 4th December 2012 Members received an update on the work of the Merseyside Brussels Office by the MBO lead officer James Sharples. At that meeting Members requested more regular updates on the ways in which the Fire and Rescue Authority engages with the MBO.
4. Merseyside Brussels Office holds quarterly meetings with member organisations to discuss the latest developments in Brussels and the actual and potential impact on Merseyside and the Liverpool City Region (including Halton). The last such meeting was held on 11th March and the previous meeting was on 5th December 2012. The MBO Policy Focus Update document for the March meeting is attached as an appendix for information.

5. Matters such as the EU budget from 2014 and the future of the EU Cohesion Policy were discussed, with information provided about the types of funding that may be available to Merseyside from next year, as well as some of the funds still remaining in the current EU budget.
6. A large part of the December meeting was given over to a presentation by the officer for the North West Health Brussels Office, which was of particular interest to the attendees from MFRA. It is apparent that much of the research work relating to health matters, particularly the social dimension to health, is relevant to MFRA and that making closer contacts in this area may be an appropriate way of tapping into EU funding as part of a larger project. One particular example is the programme of work taking place on Merseyside that is looking at assisted living and dementia. MFRA is already closely involved in dementia related projects so this would fit with existing priorities.
7. At the meeting, contact was made with a consultant on European Policy and Strategy who is working with Liverpool Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on the coordination of a number of national and transnational projects related to dementia. It is considered that working with this consultant could connect MFRA with other agencies working in this area and potentially to European funding through involvement with the LEP group. Membership of the group includes all three universities in Liverpool and MFRA has been invited to send a representative to the next meeting of the LEP group. As such, the Prevention and Protection Function is now taking this forward.
8. One focus of the March meeting was the extent to which EU funding would be available to the North West and the Liverpool City Region in particular, from 2014. The representative from the LEP explained the way in which the LEP is working with stakeholders to develop priorities for the area that it can present to the EU and UK Government. Work is ongoing to examine how best MFRA can be involved in this process.
9. Teams within Prevention and Protection are also meeting with the MBO representative to examine any programmes within the current EU budget that still have funds remaining that MFRA could bid for. Any outcomes from this will be reported to a future meeting.

Equality & Diversity Implications

10. Working closely with as wide a range of partners as possible to deal with the impact of dementia is an important part of meeting the growing needs of the elderly on Merseyside.

Staff Implications

11. There are no staff implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

12. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

13. There are no financial implications arising from this report. Continuing to work closely with the MBO has the potential to draw in additional funding, particularly when working in partnership.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

14. There are no risk management, health and safety or environmental implications arising from this report.

Contribution to Our Mission – To Achieve: Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters”

15. Through membership of the MBO, MFRA has access to information about EU priorities and funding and local partnerships that can assist the Authority in achieving its mission.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

***Glossary of Terms**