

AGENDA ITEM:

REPORT TO: Meeting of the	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE:	3RD JULY 2012
REPORT NO.	CFO/092/12
REPORTING OFFICER:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
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OFFICERS CONSULTED:	
SUBJECT:	MEMBERSHIP OF LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (FORMERLY THE MERSEY PARTNERSHIP)

ARE THERE NO APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

Purpose of Report

1. To review the membership of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), (formerly The Mersey Partnership)
2. Working with LEP aids the local economy, which in turn helps make Merseyside stronger and provides valuable information and resources that assist Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service in its future planning.

Recommendation

2. That Members approve the proposal that the Authority continues its membership of LEP.

Introduction & Background

3. Members may recall approving continuation of membership to The Mersey Partnership (TMP) for 2011/12, following report CFO/030/11 to the IRMP Scrutiny Panel.
4. In March 2012 TMP members voted unanimously for the former organisation to become the incorporated body of the new Liverpool City Region LEP. The organisation represents an important alliance between the public and private sectors, and is the Government's designated body responsible for driving sustainable economic growth across the region.

5. LEP has taken over the resources of the former TMP and their Mission for the Future, which is *“To build a dynamic partnership, campaigning for the Liverpool City Region as a great place to invest, live, work and visit – generating greater returns for all”*.
6. The 3 key areas that the organisation works in are :-
 - Economic development
 - Bringing new business investment to the city region
 - Tourism
7. LEP's do not receive any direct funding from Central Government, therefore the contributions received from Members represent an important source of income. This allows the LEP to develop economic development strategies based on agreed priorities and to facilitate their delivery with partners. This may include co-ordinating City Region bids for allocations from Government sources such as the Regional Growth Fund and Growing Places Fund.
8. It is considered that membership of LEP :-
 - Helps the development of an economically stronger Merseyside. A more prosperous Merseyside will also be less at risk from fire and other emergencies.
 - Helps support Members making strategic decisions, especially regarding the budget.
 - Helps identify possible income generation opportunities and potential markets for the sale of services.
 - Identifies societal and economic changes across Merseyside that affect risk and thus assist in future planning.
 - Provides an opportunity to focus fire safety advice on tourist businesses in a targeted way.
 - Provides valuable networking opportunities with businesses and organisations across Merseyside.
9. It is considered that the benefits to MFRS of being a Member of LEP are considerable, and therefore it is proposed that the Authority continues its membership at a cost of £5,250 for 2012/13. This fee remains the same as for 2011/12.

Equality & Diversity Implications

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

Staff Implications

11. There are no staff implications arising from this report. Any staff who attend meetings of the LEP will be the same as those who attended the former TMP meetings.

Legal Implications

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

Financial Implications & Value for Money

13. The cost of membership of the LEP remains the same for 2012/13 as the previous year for TMP at £5,250. Funding is available from existing budgets.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

14. There are no Risk Management, Health & Safety and Environmental Implications arising out of this report.

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

15. Membership of the LEP will continue to provide opportunities to contribute to and benefit from the work carried out to strengthen the economy of Merseyside in the longer term and locally benefits MFRA in the shorter term by providing information, support, advice and guidance in relation to planning and development of strategy.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

***Glossary of Terms**

TMP – The Mersey Partnership

LEP – Local Enterprise Partnership