

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	29TH JUNE 2017	REPORT NO:	CFO/046/17
PRESENTING OFFICER	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DEB APPLETON	REPORT AUTHOR:	WENDY KENYON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	DCFO PHIL GARRIGAN DAG MEMBERS SEG MEMBERS JOHN FEILDING		
TITLE OF REPORT:	EANDD ACTION PLAN YR4 END OF YEAR UPDATE AND OUTLINE FOR ANNUAL REPORT.		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PRIORITIES ACTION PLAN YEAR 4 YEAR END STATUS
	APPENDIX B:	EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2016/17, YEAR END STATUS AS AT 22.5.17

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide the Authority with :
 - An update on the progress against the agreed Equality and Diversity (E&D) actions for Year 4 (2016/17).
 - An update on the progress against the Equality Objectives for 2016/17 as at year end.

Recommendation

2. That Members note the contents of the Equality and Diversity report and Equality Objectives.

Introduction and Background

3. The E&D Action Plan was first introduced in April 2013 to help MFRA progress its long term Equality and Diversity objectives, to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and to reflect the fact that E&D was embedded and delivered across all functions of the Organisation.

4. Members of staff with a responsibility for delivering E&D actions attended a Year 5 E&D planning workshop meeting in February 2017, facilitated by the Diversity and Consultation Manager (DCM), attendees also included the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Lead Councillor for E&D, Cllr Barbara Murray. The workshop provided an opportunity for staff to revisit their achievements for year 4, to plan activities for year 5 (2017/18) and to consider the diversity events that they feel are worthy of the organisation supporting.

Progress

5. Year 4 of the E&D plan is contained in Appendix A. It has a total of 27 priorities and 58 actions across all the functions of MFRA. There are 33 actions completed and 24 that have made good progress but are being carried forward for further development in 2017/18. This report provides a high level summary of the activity delivered for each of the priority areas across the year and in particular quarter 3 and 4. The E&D Annual report will contain more detail and case studies for Members to review at a later date.
6. Some notable achievements for year 4 include;

Community Risk Management

- A total of 49,000 HFSC's have been delivered to over 65's, of which 1061 were delivered to BME householders. Further analysis will be carried out during 2017/18 to establish how to increase the BME figures to reflect the Merseyside average BME population of 8%.
- A strobe light alarm designed for people with a hearing impairment which had been fitted by our Knowsley Prevention Team has saved the lives of two people from Huyton after a fire in their kitchen.
- MFRS was recognised for its proactive work with older members of the community at an awards ceremony hosted by Liverpool Mutual Homes. MFRS was presented with the Outstanding Agency Award for its Fire Safety work with the over 65's in Merseyside. An initiative launched by Liverpool Older Housing and Wellbeing has seen partner agencies working together to help Liverpool become an 'Age-Friendly City for Older People'.
- The diversity of young people on our Princes Trust courses increases with the new intake of 56 students during quarter 3 and 4 across the five teams. The group has been recruited from different protected and vulnerable minority groups including disabilities such as - Visual Impairment, Kinesigenic Choreoathetosis (neurologic condition causing involuntary seizures), Autism, Down Syndrome, Epilepsy, ADHD and Cerebral Palsy and eight Students whose ethnicity is defined as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic
- MFRS have become Autism Champions thanks to the work being carried out by our Youth Engagement teams and in particular our Princes Trust Staff. Early this year Autism Together delivered training for our Princes' Trust Staff and Apprentice Advocates to provide staff with a better awareness of autism and the challenges people face. The charter was written by people on the autism spectrum and asks organisations to train their staff and make venues more autism-friendly. Other prominent

Liverpool organisations that have also signed the charter include, NatWest Bank, Tate Liverpool and Remploy.

- The Community Risk Managements Volunteers programme has proved very successful, they now have a team of 14 volunteers. Although the recruitment campaign for volunteers was not run as a positive action campaign the diversity of the volunteers is very good; 2 have disclosed a disability, 1 is over 65, 1 is from Romania and 1 is female. The volunteers are have already been involved in supporting our prevention teams with the Arson Awareness week and helped with the Homeless Games in April. Six volunteers have expressed an interest in receiving training for the climbing wall. Feedback has been positive from all the volunteers, who are looking forward to getting involved with future campaigns and events.

POD

- MFRS have been involved with a National Firefighter testing programme for functional fitness tests, ensuring that a diverse range of firefighters have been involved in testing and providing feedback to the national group. This will ensure that any differential impact on different groups' e.g. Female firefighters, will be identified and mitigated nationally at an early stage. Firefighters have welcomed our support and the opportunity to be involved in this important work
- Positive action – An event held at the Training and Development Academy in December to inform key partners and community members what it means to work for MFRS. The event was designed to highlight the different career opportunities available at MFRS. The event looked at the recruitment process for firefighters, the different apprentice roles available, support staff roles and volunteering opportunities. The event also covered fire safety for private and commercial premises. The event was designed to build relationships with partners so that they understand the opportunities available with MFRS in order that we can build strong working relationships with people, organisations and community groups who will be able to promote and encourage people to apply to work for MFRS and see the organisation as an employer of choice.

Operational Preparedness

- MFRS are ensuring that all equipment, uniform and personal protective equipment (PPE) is tested to ensure that the needs of different groups of firefighters are taken into account before procurement commences. This ensures that there is no detrimental impact on any particular group of staff to when carrying out their operational role effectively.

Operational Response

- In October staff from St Helens showed their support for the international campaign to end violence against women. White Ribbon Day events saw staff from MFRS and St Helens Council wearing women's shoes to walk around St Helens Town Centre. The aim was to encourage men to 'walk a mile in her shoes', to help them understand the scale of the problem and become part of the solution.

- Firefighters and District Advocates from across Merseyside, along with Merseyside's 'Mini Police', PCC Jane Kennedy and Merseyside Police's road policing team took part in an event held in Liverpool City Centre as part of a campaign to make Merseyside's road Safety. The event, which was part of the Brake's Road Safety Week, saw children from Hatton Hill Primary School in Litherland handing out their own road safety leaflets and talking to road users. The MFRS crash car was on display to highlight the potential dangers and consequences of dangerous driving.
- Enterprise South Liverpool Academy and LFC Foundation delivered safety sessions to eight children aged 11-13. The children spent four mornings at the Training and Development Academy, where they took part in various team challenges, which involved basic firefighting skills and being cut out of a car by the Search and Rescue Team. In the afternoon the pupils attended the Liverpool Football Club Education Centre for sessions about football, fitness and nutrition.

Strategy and Performance

- Following on from the successful response to the 2016 staff survey, People Insight nominated MFRA for the Engagement Awards 2016, for the category of Employee Engagement Public Sector Company of the Year. The finalists were announced at the end of November with MFRA, listed as one of the five finalists. Sandwell Council won the award, but the nomination reflects the progress made by MFRA in relation to staff engagement.
- Work continues with our staff networks and forums with both networks planning more objectives for the following year. The Female Firefighters Forum members have identified themes they feel are useful to discuss at future meetings and each meeting is going to be chaired and sponsored by Female firefighter to enable them to take ownership of their forum and develop valuable presentation and leadership skills.
- A staff Equality and Diversity E-learning programme has been developed in house and endorsed externally by Employers Forum for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI). Further testing internally is taking place before launching more widely.

Legal, Procurement and Democratic Services

- Member engagement days have continued throughout the year and have been a great success. Visits to Community Fire Stations are also being arranged for Members, allowing operational staff to engage with Members and find out more about what they do as an Authority Member.

Strategic Change and Resources

- An access audit was carried out in 2014 and it has ensured that stations are updated to meet the latest disability access guidance in relation to building regulations. The audit also highlighted changes and improvements in relation to facilities for Female firefighters across some of the older stations.

- ICT have continued to assist the organisation with making adaptations for individuals in order to support their different disabilities, they are also ensuring that the development of the new MFRS website have assistive technology capabilities to support those with hearing, visual and learning impairments. ICT department continues to develop its own staff around the E&D agenda with staff undertaking (voluntarily) E&D NVQ learning packages.

Joint working across Functions

2. The Knowing our Communities project has delivered a demographic profile data tool which enables staff to understand the makeup of their communities when carrying our community engagement activities and planning for the future. Since the tool was launched in November 2016 it has supported work around tension monitoring activities supporting Fire Control, identifying key areas for Business Safety week, preparation for Ramadan and planning around the Arson Strategy. The tool was developed through joint working by Strategy and Performance (Business Intelligence and the Diversity and Consultation Manager) and Community Risk Management and input from colleagues across the organisation.
3. Two Diversity awareness days have taken place during the last two quarters including International Women's Day and Older Person's Day. The purpose of the days is to provide staff with more information and support around the particular theme to enable them to deliver their roles more effectively and inclusively supporting diverse staff and communities. The Diversity calendar was issued and launched at the Carol concert and provides a comprehensive list of diversity events and awareness days plus NFCC and local campaigns
4. The Local Government Association Equality Framework self-assessment exercise was held between November and January. Sixteen meetings were held with various representatives from across the functions to gather information and evidence of the work being carried out to contribute to the five strands of the Equality Framework, A wide range of examples were given and some of these will be used in our Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2016/17. These include:-
 - i. Authority Engagement days
 - ii. Work being carried out by our Operational Equipment team as part of the North West Procurement process to trial and purchase suitable PPE.
 - iii. The new positive action stakeholder events
 - iv. First Business Safety Awareness week focusing on Diverse Business engagement.
7. Progress towards our five Equality Objectives is detailed in Appendix B, against each Objective in graphical format together with a short narrative which explains the position in more detail for scrutiny purposes. The year-end position is encouraging and positive with four objectives being comfortably met.

Objective four was not achieved due to increase levels of road traffic collisions and resulting deaths.

8. This is the final report on these objectives which have been replaced by new Objectives in the 2017/18 Service Delivery Plan.

Equality and Diversity Implications

9. This report focuses on Equality and Diversity progress, the implications of which are critical to MFRA maintaining its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010- Public Sector Equality Duty and working towards the achievement of the LGA Equality Excellence Framework

Staff Implications

10. Staff have been integral to the creation of this report through a number of processes including attending the Diversity Action Group Forum, meeting with the Diversity and Consultation Manager and providing regular written communication updates. Staff attending the DAG also receive regular E&D training and briefings to help them better engage with their communities and staff.

Legal Implications

11. The Equality and Diversity Report demonstrates the work that is being conducted to meet the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty requirements.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

12. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Further costs may be associated with the development of Annual report but these will be funded through the normal Diversity Budget.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

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

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

14. Delivering services in a way that meets Equality and Diversity legal duties and best practice is essential for a public sector organisations. This report contributes to demonstrating how we make our diverse communities safer and stronger and how we support the needs of our staff in relation to their protected characteristics

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

DAG	Diversity Action Group
SEG	Strategic Equalities Group
E and D	Equality and Diversity
HFSC	Home Fire Safety Check
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
SEG	Strategic Equality Group
SMG	Strategic Management Group