

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	15 DECEMBER 2017	REPORT NO:	CFO/075/17
PRESENTING OFFICER	JANET HENSHAW, MONITORING OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER	REPORT AUTHOR:	JANET HENSHAW
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP		
TITLE OF REPORT:	REFORM OF MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY		

APPENDICES:	
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Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the progress of the working group established to consider the detail of the proposed reforms to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA).

Recommendation

2. That Members note the current situation in relation to the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority
3. The Chair recommends that any reforms of MFRA are suspended until the position of the LCR Combined Authority on Police and Fire and Rescue Service governance is known.

Introduction and Background

4. Members will recall a report on proposed reforms of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) which was approved at its AGM on 13th June 2017.
5. As Members are aware a small working group was established, comprising the Chair and Deputy Chair of MFRA; the Chair of the Community Safety & Protection Committee; the Opposition spokesperson for MFRA; the Monitoring Officer and the Democratic Services Manager, with the following Terms of Reference:
 - a) To reform Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority in order to prepare for future developments for the Combined Authority in Merseyside.
 - b) To agree a plan for this reform by the end October 2017 which delivers substantial savings to contribute to the overall financial challenge to MFRA in current and future years.

- c) To ensure that the future reformed Authority is effective and efficient to deliver its statutory functions.
 - d) To consult with such internal and external stakeholders as required in the process of developing reforms.
 - e) To undertake a review of the Members Allowances Scheme, based on the proposed reforms, to ensure that allowance payments to Members appointed to the reformed Authority, are reflective of the role they will undertake.
6. The group also agreed to report back to the Authority in December 2017 making any recommendations for reform.
 7. Letters were sent to all the District Council Leaders, as part of a consultation on the proposed reforms. Only one response was received proposing reform by two members from each District being nominated to MFRA.
 8. A letter was also sent to the Metro Mayor requesting that the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) and the Chair of the Authority be permitted to present a report to the LCR Combined Authority about the proposed reform.
 9. In November 2017 the CFO and the Chair of MFRA met with the Metro Mayor. At the meeting the Metro Mayor advised that work was now underway to consider future “tranches” of the devolution plans in Merseyside, including whether the governance of Police and the FRS would transfer to the Metro Mayor of the LCR Combined Authority.
 10. Under these circumstances the Chair of MFRA has come to the conclusion that the proposed reforms of MFRA should be suspended until the outcome of this work is known.
 11. The MFRA working group will not be disbanded but will meet only as necessary when progress with the LCR Combined Authority planning is more certain.

Equality and Diversity Implications

12. There are no Equality or Diversity implications contained in this report.

Staff Implications

13. There may be staff implications if MFRA is to be merged into the Combined Authority at some future point, as “TUPE like” transfers will need to be considered.

Legal Implications

14. There are no immediate legal issues in this report.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

15. Members will be aware that the combined proposals for reform of MFRA would have delivered a saving of £102,896.00 per annum which would contribute to any future Authority savings target.
16. The Chair has indicated that these savings will now need to be put back into the budget setting process.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

17. A financial risk exists if savings cannot be delivered through reforms to the Authority.

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

18. There is no effect on the services to the community at this time.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/111/11

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA	M erseyside F ire and R escue A uthority is the physical and legal entity. When writing reports MFRA is the “object”.
MFRS	M erseyside F ire and R escue S ervice is the service provided by MFRA. When writing reports MFRS is the “action”
E.G.	You are employed by the Authority (MFRA). The job you do forms part of the Service (MFRS) provided by the Authority (MFRA). If in doubt use MFRA.