

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	18 OCTOBER 2018	REPORT NO:	CFO/054/18
PRESENTING OFFICER	JANET HENSHAW		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	JANET HENSHAW	REPORT AUTHOR:	KELLY KELLAWAY, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER, EXTN 4113
OFFICERS CONSULTED:			
TITLE OF REPORT:	REVISED PROTOCOL - REPORTING AT AUTHORITY MEETINGS		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A: REVISED PROTOCOL ON REPORTING AT AUTHORITY MEETINGS
--------------------	--

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members consider the attached revised Protocol on Reporting at Authority Meetings, for implementation and publication on the Authority's Website.

Recommendation

2. That Members approve the attached revised Protocol on Reporting at Authority Meetings, for implementation and publication on the Authority's Website.

Introduction and Background

3. In August 2014, The Openness in Local Government Bodies Regulations came into force, which provides for any person to report on meetings of local authorities that are open to the public, including the filming, photographing or audio recording of such meetings.
4. At the time when these Regulations came into force, a Protocol on Reporting at Meetings was produced. However there were significant building works underway at MFRA's Headquarters building at that time, which is where the majority of its decision making meetings are held.
5. Since the introduction of those regulations and the production of the initial Protocol, the layout and usage of the building has changed significantly, resulting in a far greater emphasis on security.

6. In addition, the building is now shared with other agencies, resulting in a significant increase in the number of people based within the building; and visiting the building.
7. As such, it is now considered to be timely for the Protocol to be reviewed and updated.

Equality and Diversity Implications

8. There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.
9. The Protocol will apply equally to all members of the public or press wishing to attend meetings of MFRA.

Staff Implications

10. Adherence to this Protocol will help to ensure a safe, secure working environment for all staff operating within the building.
11. The Protocol also stipulates that any individuals visiting MFRA premises for the purpose of attending meetings of MFRA, will be expected to treat all members of staff and other visitors with courtesy and respect. Failure to do so, may result in them being asked to leave the premises; and being refused access to the meeting room.

Legal Implications

12. The revised Protocol will enable MFRA to continue to meet its obligations within The Openness in Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, whilst ensuring that the building remains a safe and secure environment for everyone visiting it, or operating within it.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

13. There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

14. Implementation of the revised Protocol, will help to prevent overcrowding in the Reception area of MFRA's Headquarters Building, reducing potential health and safety risks for staff and visitors.
15. It will also ensure that the security of the building is maintained.

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

16. Adoption of the revised Protocol will help to ensure the security and safety of the building, staff and visitors, whilst also maintaining MFRA's commitment to openness and transparency in the way it conducts its business.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
