

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY BUDGET MEETING		
DATE:	27 FEBRUARY 2014	REPORT NO:	CFO/021/14
PRESENTING OFFICER	CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	JANET HENSHAW	REPORT AUTHOR:	JANET HENSHAW
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP		
TITLE OF REPORT:	CONSULTATION FROM DCLG: OPENNESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES DRAFT REGULATIONS 2014		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	LETTER FROM DCLG
	APPENDIX B:	DRAFT REGULATIONS
	APPENDIX C:	DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS
	APPENDIX D:	DRAFT RESPONSE TO DCLG

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members consider the response to DCLG in respect of Draft Regulation on openness in Local Government.

Recommendation

2. That Members;
 - a. approve, the consultation response attached as Appendix D to this report, and/or
 - b. instruct the Monitoring Officer regarding any proposed amendments to the consultation response

Introduction and Background

3. On 10 February 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued a Consultation on draft Regulations entitled "The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014". The consultation closes on 12 March 2014.
4. The letter from DCLG is attached as Appendix A to this report with the draft Regulations attached as Appendix B. A "Descriptive summary" is attached as Appendix C.
5. Members will note that the draft Regulations makes reference to proposed amendments to Local Government legislation as refer to public meetings of the

Authority or its Committees as well as making proposed changes to delegation of powers to Officers.

6. A response is attached at Appendix D and Members are asked to consider this and propose any amendments they may wish to make to the response.

Equality and Diversity Implications

7. There are no direct Equality and Diversity implications in this report. If the Regulations are given assent then any future meetings of the Authority or its Committees will need to consider the implications in any future report

8.

Staff Implications

9. There will be implications for any staff who are given delegated authority to ensure compliance with these Regulations if they are given assent

Legal Implications

10. The draft 2014 Regulations propose amendments to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Local Government Act 1972; the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

11. There are no direct financial implications however the draft Regulations make reference to delegations to officers under the Scheme of Delegation which concern (amongst other things) where such delegated decisions may incur expenditure which materially affects the Authority's financial position.
12. There is the potential for an increased administration burden to comply with the regulations

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

13. There is a risk that inaccurate or misleading information may be published before approved Minutes are available which could create difficult problems.

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

14. It is the view of DCLG that these Regulations will make Local Authorities more accountable however this could also create other problems if information is not accurate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

DCLG **Department for Communities and Local Government**