

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	14 DECEMBER 2017	REPORT NO:	CFO/067/17
PRESENTING OFFICER	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DEB APPLETON	REPORT AUTHOR:	WENDY KENYON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	MEMBERS OF DIVERSITY ACTION GROUP AND STRATEGIC EQUALITY GROUP		
TITLE OF REPORT:	EQUALITY & DIVERSITY PLAN 2017-2020, FUNCTIONAL PRIORITIES 2017/18, 6 MONTH UPDATE		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	EQUALITY & DIVERSITY PLAN 2017-2020, FUNCTIONAL PRIORITIES 2017/18
	APPENDIX B:	EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2017 – 2020

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide Members with :
 - a. An update on the agreed Equality and Diversity (E& D) plan for 2017/18 together with an update on progress against the actions for the first 6 months of the year;
 - b. An update on the Equality Objectives for 2017/18.

Recommendation

2. That Members note the content of the Equality and Diversity progress report and Equality Objectives and provide feedback on the amount of progress made.

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. A new plan was developed for 2017-2020 which is aligned to the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan and linked to the Authority's new Equality Objectives.

Progress

5. Appendix 1 includes updates for the 45 priority areas under the heading “Quarter 1 & 2 update” where there has been activity delivered. Progress has been made against 38 (amber) priorities, 2 (green) have been fully completed and 5 (red) have yet to start. Members should note that the actions will be delivered over the life of the action plan and as such the report does not necessarily reflect the amount of resources and time taken to achieve and deliver the actions, which will need to be considered when scrutinising the progress.
6. Some actions can be delivered very quickly and others could take months or even years to be fully implemented. The following sections a to h include highlight of the exceptional work undertaken by our staff and volunteers:
 - a. A Vulnerable Persons Advocate in Liverpool, carried out a British Sign language (BSL) referral for a HFSC. The Advocate in question, Ellie Williams would not normally carry out the BSL referrals, as these would be carried out by a colleague, Sarah Hannett. Sarah was on annual leave and as she knew that Ellie had recently completed her BSL level 1 asked if she would be able to carry out the visit. Following the visit feedback was received from the property owners to say that Ellie had been very helpful and had provided them with all the fire safety information that they needed.
 - b. In May, ahead of this year’s Ramadan period, the Authority held a targeted Fire Safety Campaign, providing residents and businesses with tailored fire safety advice in the Princes Park ward of Liverpool, where 40% of the population are Black Asian or Minority Ethnic. It is also known that there is a large Muslim community within the area. The afternoon campaign saw Advocates and fire crews delivering 59 HFSC’s, engaging with 25 Muslim families, delivering 38 bespoke leaflets, including to properties where Muslim families are known to live, with only 5 refusals of HFSCs.
 - c. MFRA has been instrumental in the development of two new blue light initiatives with Merseyside Police. The first saw the introduction of a Merseyside Autism Attention Card. The card can help people with autism to alert emergency services to their condition so that they can be treated more specifically. MFRA has agreed to carry out a HFSC for anyone with an attention card. More work will take place to provide advocates and fire crews with further guidance and education on the impact that autism might have on individuals’ approach to fire safety and evacuation from a fire. The second initiative is the Dementia Pledge which was signed by MFRA, Merseyside Police and NWS at the Joint Control Centre in Bootle. The Pledge is part of a national emergency services programme and MFRA will deliver more training and guidance to staff over the next 12 months to ensure they are more aware about the implications of dementia and Alzheimer’s.
 - d. MFRA have provided feedback to the National Joint Council Inclusions Group on their 26 recommendations in relation to equality, diversity and

inclusion. MFRA have fared well against those recommendations, with nearly all relevant actions being in progress currently through either our Equality Objectives or Equality and Diversity Action Plan. Officers believe that this work will support our approach to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services in future inspections.

- e. Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy in June, high rise campaigns were delivered and in order to deliver them effectively to those whose first language isn't English Officers created a number of translation packs for the most commonly used languages spoken across Merseyside: French, Arabic, Polish, Cantonese, Urdu, Kurdish, Chinese (simple), Romanian, Spanish, Tamil and Czech. As well as giving these leaflets to staff they were also published on the MFRA website. A sentence was also added to the reverse of the original leaflet in those same languages directing people to the MFRA website for more information. Further support was provided to Community Risk Management staff on how to use the Language Line translation service to assist with providing fire safety advice on a face to face basis. The Service will be setting up a small translation group in the future to assist with any large campaigns and providing fire safety guidance in different languages
- f. All staff within MFRA's Youth Engagement service have received Mental Health First Aid training and will offer advice, guidance and information (AGI) to all children and young people (CYP) participating on all programmes. Opportunities for CYP to access other provision for additional support across Merseyside is made available through several mediums including centric learning which supports students to control their own learning/development experience.
- g. This year has seen MFRA publish for the first time data about the Gender Pay Gap; the report has been completed and published for 2016/17. The data has been included in the Equality Analysis of Workforce and Employment Data as of 31st March 2017. MFRA Gender Pay Gap was 12% which is significantly lower than the UK average at 18%.
- h. The Engaging Diverse Business project has been successfully adopted and supported by the National Fire Chief's Council. This work is of national strategic importance for FRS and MFRA is a lead service on the project. The outcomes of the project will enable business safety teams to learn more about how to support diverse business owners to enable them to meet fire safety legislation and reduce the chances of prosecution within diverse business owners.
- i. Community Profiles are being used across the Service to help prepare for Service planning and to assist stations and managers with understanding the demographics of Merseyside. The tool is being developed further to include demographic information about businesses

across Merseyside to assist with monitoring our business fire safety work.

7. Appendix 2 provides Members with the five newly agreed Equality Objectives which will now be reported on annually. The next report for Authority (summer 2018) will include progress on the objectives 2107-2020. The document in Appendix 2 also provides Members with the detail of what measures will be used and reported on for each equality objective. The equality objectives have also been reviewed against the draft HMICFRS key line of enquiries (KLOE) and other NJC and Local Government Association benchmarks for equality and diversity. This demonstrates that the equality objectives set for MFRA are also providing evidence for a significant number of national standards, benchmarks and audits.

Equality and Diversity Implications

8. This report focuses on Equality and Diversity progress, 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

9. Staff have been integral to the creation of this report through a number of processes including attending planning meetings, 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

10. 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

11. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

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

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

13. 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 MFRA support the needs of our staff in relation to their protected characteristics

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AGI	Advice, Guidance & Information
BSL	British Sign Language
C&PY	Children & Young People
CLGA	Communities and Local Government Association
DAG	Diversity Action Group
SEG	Strategic Equalities Group
E and D	Equality and Diversity
FRS	Fire & Rescue Service
HFSC	Home Fire Safety Check
JCC	Joint Control Centre
KLOE	Key Line of Enquiry
LGA	Local Government Authority
MFRA	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority
MFRS	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
NFCC	National Fire Chiefs Council
NJC	National Joint Council
NWAS	North West Ambulance Service
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
SEG	Strategic Equality Group
SMG	Strategic Management Group