MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

12 APRIL 2018

MINUTES

Present: **Cllr Dave Hanratty (Chair)** Councillors Ireland, Lynne Thompson, Edna Finneran, Denise Allen, Joe De'Asha, Janet Grace, Brian Kenny, Chris Meaden, Les Byrom, Peter Brennan, Lesley Rennie, James Roberts, Jean Stapleton, Sharon Sullivan and Paul Tweed

Also Present:

Apologies of absence were received from:
Jane Kennedy (PCC), Cllr Sharon Connor and Cllr Barbara Murray

7. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chair of the Authority thanked everyone for their attendance, due to the changed of meeting to a full Authority.

He welcomed Cllr Pat Ireland, who had replaced Cllr Lynn Clarke on the Authority, and stated that he hoped she enjoyed her time on the Authority and wished her well for the following Municipal Year when she would be the Mayor of St. Helens.

Information regarding general housekeeping was provided by the Chair to all in attendance.

The Chair confirmed to all present that the proceedings of the meeting would be filmed and requested that any members of the public present who objected to being filmed, make themselves known.

No members of the public voiced any objection therefore the meeting was declared open and recording commenced.

1. Preliminary Matters

The Authority considered the identification of any declarations of interest, matters of urgency or items that would require the exclusion of the press and public due to the disclosure of exempt information.

Resolved that:

a) no declarations of interest where identified by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda.

b) no additional items of business which the Chair has determined should be considered as matters of urgency, where identified.

c) The following items of business required the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof, due to the possible disclosure of exempt information:

- Agenda item 5 – "Confidential Report" contains Exempt information by virtue of Paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

  Members were advised that this item would be a verbal update provided by the Chief Fire Officer.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Members were advised that the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Authority, held on 14th December 2017, are included for information only, as they have already been approved at the Budget Authority Meeting on 22nd February 2018.

The Minutes of the Budget Authority Meeting on 22nd February 2018, would be submitted for approval as a correct record and for signature by the Chair at the next full Authority Meeting on 24th May 2018, as scheduled.

3. Information Governance and Security Policy

Members considered Report CFO/022/18 of the Chief Fire Officer, concerning the implications of the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation on 25th May 2018 and request that Members consider and approve the Authority's Information Governance and Security Policy (Appendix A), which has been revised to reflect this legislative change.

Members were advised that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will be coming into effect as of 25th May 2018.

They were provided with an overview of the report, which detailed the GDPR and the differences between it and the Data Protection Act 1998; and highlighted the legal obligations and potential sanctions for any breaches.

Members were also informed of the action taken to implement GDPR and the revised Information Governance and Security Policy attached for consideration.

The Chair of the Authority advised that for all those Members who would still be on the Authority following the Local Elections, there would be a presentation delivered around GDPR on the 24th May 2018, to which all Members are required to attend.

Questions were raised around whether there would be any specific audit days dedicated to GDPR. Members were informed that a Working Group had been established as soon as the Authority became aware of the introduction of GDPR, to look at potential implications; and that awareness sessions had been provided to various teams in preparation for its introduction. Although no audit days have been assigned to GDPR as yet, Members were advised that they will be in due course.

Members Resolved that:

a) The implications of the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation and the actions being taken to prepare for implementation, be noted.

b) The revised Information Governance and Security Policy, be approved.

4. Multi Agency Hoarding Protocol Progress Report

Members considered report CFO/015/18 of the Chief Fire Officer, concerning the progress made in relation to the Multi-Agency Hoarding and Self-Neglect Protocol (MHSP) developed following a double fatality at a fire in a single private dwelling where hoarding was identified as a contributory factor in relation to the loss of life.

Members were provided with an overview of the report, which detailed the background to the development of a Multi-Agency Hoarding and Self-Neglect Protocol with regards to recommendations in a Regulation 28 Coroners Letter: Hoarding Fire Fatality, directed to the Secretary of State for the Home Office Rt. Hon. Amber Rudd.

Members were advised of a recent case in which the MHSP was utilised to secure a warrant of entry into an owner occupied property in order to address a high risk hoarding safeguarding concern and details regarding the case where explained to Members.

Members were also informed of the intended action to disseminate information regarding this case, to enable shared learning; and that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer would be writing to the Liverpool and Wirral Coroner and Secretary of State for the Home Office, to update them on the progress.

Members suggested that a press release be issued and a request made to include this case study on the agenda for the Merseyside Community Safety Partnerships, in order to promote the Protocol; and commented that it is a further example of MFRS being proactive and leading the way in preventing fire deaths and protecting the vulnerable.

Questions were raised regarding the position with adoption of a Protocol within Wirral; and Members were advised that progress is being made, the extent of which would be established and Members informed post meeting.

Further questions were raised and comments made regarding the removal of hoarding material following the cessation of the Community Risk Intervention Service; and powers of entry to make required interventions.
Members were advised that powers of entry do exist, but rest with the local authorities and that long before the Mather Avenue incident occurred, which resulted in the Regulation 28 Coroners Letter, MFRA have been proposing recommendations and a protocol for agencies to work together to address such issues. However, it has only been since that incident that MFRA have had the leverage to move the matter forward. With regards to the mechanics of the intervention, Members were informed that Environmental Health have the powers to remove debris and hoarding material. Members were further informed that each agency will draw on their specific powers to make interventions together.

With regards to a press release, it was noted that this should be produced in collaboration with all agencies involved.

Members Resolved that:

a) The effective progress of the MHSP, be noted.

b) The significance of this progress in light of the double fatality fire incident and the consequential regulation 28 letter from the Coroner to the Secretary of State for the Home Office, be noted.

c) The intention to share the learning from this progress with safeguarding partners and the wider Fire and Rescue Service, be noted.

d) The recent success in obtaining a warrant of entry in order to conduct a hoarding intervention to safeguard vulnerable occupants, be noted.

e) The intention to write to the Liverpool and Wirral Coroner and Secretary of State for the Home Office to update them on the progress following their previous involvement, be noted.

f) A Multi Agency press release be produced to promote the success of the MHSP.

g) A request be made to include the effective progress of the MHSP as an agenda item for the Merseyside Community Safety Partnerships, to promote the Protocol and enable the information to be appropriately disseminated.

5. Part 2 EXEMPT minutes

Members were advised that the Part 2 EXEMPT Minutes of the previous meeting of the Authority, held on 14th December 2017, are included for information only, as they have already been approved at the Budget Authority Meeting on 22nd February 2018.

The Minutes of the Budget Authority Meeting on 22nd February 2018, would be submitted for approval as a correct record and for signature by the Chair at the next full Authority Meeting on 24th May 2018, as scheduled.

6. Confidential Report

This Minute contains EXEMPT information by virtue of Paragraph 1 and 2, of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 24 May 2018

Signed:_____ Date:_____