MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	**AUTHORITY**		
DATE:	**14 JUNE 2016**	**REPORT NO:**	**CFO/049/16**
PRESENTING OFFICER	**MONIORING OFFICER**		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**JANET HENSHAW**	**REPORT AUTHOR:**	**KELLY KELLAWAY – DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER, EXT 4113**
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	**SIMON PURCELL - ACCOUNTANT**		
TITLE OF REPORT:	**MEMBERS ALLOWANCE PAYMENTS 2015/16**		

APPENDICES:	**APPENDIX A:**	**BREAKDOWN OF MEMBERS ALLOWANCE PAYMENTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/16**

Purpose of Report

1. To advise the Authority of payments made to Members in the form of allowances, during the financial year 2015/16.

Recommendation

2. That Members note the information contained within the report and Appendix A.

Introduction and Background

3. Regulation 15 of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, requires that the total sums paid to each Member for Basic, Special Responsibility, Travel, Subsistence and Co-optees Allowance, be published. Appendix A (attached) shows the total amount of allowances paid to each Member during the financial year 2015/16, including on costs. It also provides a breakdown of those total allowance payments into allowance type (approximate amounts excluding on costs).

4. Appendix A includes clarification notes where individual Members have left or joined the Authority, or changed roles during the course of the last Financial Year.

5. For clarity, the Authority appointed an Independent Person who, with effect from 1st October 2013, has carried out the duties of a Co-opted Member in relation to Independent Scrutiny. He is currently appointed to the Performance & Scrutiny Committee, as well as the role of an Independent Person to consider any complaints against a Member of the Authority (should any be made) in relation

to a breach of the Members Code Of Conduct. Invoices are submitted by the Independent Person for any works conducted in relation to these roles, which are then checked by the Democratic Services Manager prior to approval being given for payment. Appendix A also includes payments for duties conducted by the Independent Person in performing these roles, which were paid at a daily rate of £50 during 2015/16.

6. In addition to the total amount of allowances paid to each individual Member (including all on costs - tax and national insurance deductions etc.), Appendix A also details the approximate amount of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) payments, made to Members appointed to special roles within the Authority. These are intended to give an indication as to the amount of allowances received by each Member for performing particular roles within the Authority. These breakdown amounts are approximate as they do not include on costs - tax and national insurance deductions etc. Also, the payments reported are for the Financial Year 2015/16, which spans two Municipal Years – 2014/15 and 2015/16; and some Members may have left or joined the Authority, or changed roles, at various stages throughout the period reported. It would be very onerous under these circumstances to try to provide a breakdown of the exact total amount paid to each individual Member, by type of allowance, for the exact period they were in receipt of each allowance. However Members can be assured that any differential would be negligible.

7. Members appointed to specialist roles only receive an SRA payment for one role (usually the role with the largest responsibility), regardless of the number of specialist roles they are appointed to, in line with the Members Scheme of Allowances.

8. Also included within Appendix A are reimbursements for mileage, overnight accommodation, travel and subsistence allowances, which have been claimed by individual Members through the Authority's Scheme of Allowances. It is important to note that these are reimbursements for time and expenses incurred by Members; and are not payments in relation to travel and events bookings made directly by MFRA.

Equality and Diversity Implications

9. There are no equality or diversity implications arising out of the report.

Staff Implications

10. Members Allowance Claims are checked against attendance at events; and approved by the Democratic Services Manager for payment.

Legal Implications

11. Members have an approved Members Allowance Scheme and are therefore entitled to payment of allowances and reimbursement of expenses as set out in within that scheme.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

12. The rates of allowances are determined by the Authority and are reviewed periodically.

13. The total cost of Members Payments for 2015/16, under the Scheme of Members Allowances, was £228,388 (compared to £239,000 for 2014/15).

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

14. Members of the Authority are required to use the most efficient method of transport when travelling on Authority business.

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

15. Members of the Authority are provided with basic allowances to cover the costs of time, travel, subsistence and responsibility. This provides Members with the opportunity and ability to attend events to represent the Authority, which contributes to effective decision making for the benefit of the community.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS