MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

30 JUNE 2016

MINUTES

Present: **Cllr Dave Hanratty (Chair)** Councillors Denise Allen, Sharon Connor, Joe De'Asha, Janet Grace, Brian Kenny, Veronica McNeill, Chris Meaden, Les Byrom, Linda Maloney, Peter Brennan, Barbara Murray, Lesley Rennie, James Roberts, Jean Stapleton, Sharon Sullivan, Paul Tweed and Marianne Welsh

Also Present:

Apologies of absence were received from:

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 were made by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda.

b) The following additional item of business was determined by the Chair to be considered as a matter of urgency:

- **Agenda Item 6 –** ***Police & Fire Collaboration – Corporate Services Review***

c) The following items of business contained EXEMPT information:

- **Agenda Item 3 –** ***Part 2 – EXEMPT Minutes of the Previous Meeting***
- **Appendix A to Agenda Item 6 -** ***Police & Fire Collaboration – Corporate Services Review***

Members were advised that should any discussion be required around either of these documents, the press and public would need to be excluded during consideration thereof, due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the authority, held on 14th June 2016, were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

3. Part 2 - EXEMPT Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The EXEMPT minutes of the previous meeting of the Authority, held on 14th June 2016, were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

4. REVIEW OF SICKNESS ABSENCE

Members considered Report CFO/058/16 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning an overview of sickness absence levels following the introduction of the capability procedure and associated HR policies in 2014/15.

Members were provided with an overview of the report, detailing the process and rationale for the introduction of a Capability Procedure; and the raft of occupational health provisions available to staff to promote positive health and wellbeing. Members were informed of the overall reductions in sickness absence and were provided with a breakdown of sickness levels across all staff groups.

It was noted that whilst overall reductions in sickness absence have been observed, there has been an increase in short-term sickness across all staff groups and an increase in long term and short term sickness amongst Control Staff.

The overview also informed Members that MFRA sickness absence figures are significantly below the national average, showing a continuous improvement over previous years' figures, with MFRS now being the 3rd best performing Service nationally.

Discussion took place around the reasons for the overall reduction in sickness absence and Members commended Officers for the results and the report. Particular discussion centred around the introduction of more flexible duty systems and the role they can play in reducing sickness absence for operational personnel; and around the results of the first staff survey regarding staff engagement.

Members welcomed the success so far in reducing sickness absence overall and thanked all staff.

Members Resolved that:

a) The content of the report and the improvement that has been achieved in relation to long term sickness absence through the utilisation of innovative Occupational

Health practice; and the transparent and supportive management of sickness absence, be noted.

b) The increase in short term sickness absence figures, be noted.

c) A further report with regards to the proposed actions to address this current increase, be requested.

5. Approved Exemptions to Contract Standing Orders 2015-16

Members considered report CFO/057/16 of the Monitoring Officer, advising them of the approved exemption requests for the period 2015/16.

Members were provided with an overview of the report which highlighted the number of approved exemptions for 2015/16 and of the reasons for these exemptions.

Several of the exemptions were discussed in greater detail and Members were provide with reassurance that none of the exemptions breached European Law.

It was resolved that:

The contents of the report be noted.

6. POLICE & FIRE COLLABORATION - CORPORATE SERVICES REVIEW

Members considered report CFO/060/16 of the Chief Fire Officer informing Members of the progress on the development of the Outline Business Case for Collaboration in the delivery of Corporate Services for Merseyside Police (MP), Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). Members were asked for approval to engage Deloitte LLP to develop an Outline Business Case that considers options to transform Corporate Services across the organisations.

Members were reminded of the strong political drive for collaboration between Police Forces and Fire and Rescue Authorities nationally and were advised that the PCC for Merseyside had already approved the appointment of Deloitte LLP as the preferred bidder.

Members' attention was drawn to the costs of each bid and they were provided with detail regarding the apportionment of weightings and differences in costs for each bidder.

Members were supportive of the need for collaboration and of the need for an equal apportionment of costs with Merseyside Police in order to maintain an equal stake in any outcome. However concerns were raised regarding the cost of the winning bid.

Significant debate took place regarding the cost and rationale behind awarding the tender to Deloitte rather than a cheaper bidder. Members were advised that although the lower bidder had an advantage on cost, the interview and evaluation process revealed that they were not as strong on quality as some of the other bidders.

Officers verbally presented the case for awarding the contract to Deloitte, confirming that the Authority does not have the capacity to deliver such an in depth review in-house.

Members accepted the rationale provided by Officers, however they requested that the resolution reflect that rationale.
Therefore an amendment to the recommendations was put forward. This was moved by Councillor Maloney; seconded by Councillor Sullivan and agreed unanimously by Members.

Members Resolved that:

a) In consideration of the following, the engagement of Deloitte LLP as the consultants to work with officers to produce an outline Business Case collaborative operating model for the delivering on Corporate Service functions for Merseyside Police, MFRA and where appropriate the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner on the basis of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, be approved.

   I. the matrix mark and two bidders being almost equal, but at interview Deloitte LLP performing the best; and

   II. verbal information provided by the Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirming that Deloitte demonstrated best Value for Money.

   III. Confirmation from the Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer that there is no organisational capacity to undertake this work in house.

b) An equal cost apportionment between MFRA and Merseyside Police, which equates to a contribution of £137,000 by the Authority, be approved.

c) An all-party letter be drafted and submitted to Government regarding the burden of the cost of this exercise on the Authority.

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 20 October 2016

Signed:_____ Date:_____