

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	6 MAY 2014	REPORT NO:	CFO/043/14
PRESENTING OFFICER	KIERAN TIMMINS DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	JANET HENSHAW	REPORT AUTHOR:	HELEN PEEK DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER EXT 4112
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	WENDY KENYON EQAULTY AND DIVERSITY OFFICER		
TITLE OF REPORT:	MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY MEMBERS EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MONITORING		
APPENDICES:	APPENDIX 1: MFRA MEMBERS EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MONITORING FORM		

Purpose of Report

1. To advise Members of the introduction of formal Equality and Diversity monitoring of all Members appointed to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority.

Recommendation

2. That Members;
 - a. note the introduction of the formal equality and diversity monitoring form for all Members appointed to the Authority; and,
 - b. approve that all Members be issued with the forms with their Annual Meeting Agenda Packs, for completion and return to the Democratic Services Manager at the Annual Meeting.

Introduction and Background

3. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority are cognisant of their equality duties and endeavour, to make sufficient provision for its employee's, and through engagement with the community and community groups.
4. The Democratic Services Manager has always ensured that Members needs are catered for as far as practicable by the Democratic Services Team but this has been carried out informally to date.

5. An action has been set within the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2014/15 to create a formal monitoring form for completion by all Members appointed to the Authority. This will enable formal records to be maintained and appropriate measures put in place to make reasonable adjustments to enable Members appointed to the Authority to carry out their day to day duties if required.
6. The introduction of this form may also encourage Members to declare, in strict confidence, any impairments/disabilities which they may not previously have thought to mention. This also provides an instant opportunity for all Members, particularly New Members joining the Authority, to make contact with the Diversity and Consultation Manager at their own comfort to discuss any potential concerns they may have prior to completing the form and vice versa should anything be highlighted on completion of the form. Discussions can then take place and reasonable adjustments considered.
7. It is requested that the Authority consider the attached monitoring form (at appendix 1) and agree to the issue of these forms to all Members requesting that they be completed and returned to the Democratic Services Manager at the Annual Meeting to allow considerations to be given for any reasonable adjustments required for all Members appointed to the Authority for the new Municipal year.
8. Presently similar forms are completed by employees when joining the workforce, and it would seem appropriate that such information be requested in relation to Authority Members and will help MFRS to monitor how diverse its Authority representation is.

Equality and Diversity Implications

9. The introduction of a Equality Monitoring for Authority Members is positive in relation to Equality and Diversity and does not require an EIA

Staff Implications

10. Officers within Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority will continue to support Members of the Authority with any specified requirements as far as practicable.

Legal Implications

11. The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to consider the needs of 9 protected groups in relation to the way it carries out its public services and supports its employees. This also covers the need to make meetings and services accessible for all Authority members, including those with specific disclosed disabilities and health conditions. The Authority has already approved the Equality Action Plan and this will continue to be monitored by the Performance and Scrutiny Committee.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

12. There are no specific financial implications in relation to this report, however there may be some financial implications dependent on the nature of reasonable adjustments which may be identified, e.g. special equipment

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

13. Health and Safety will be considered in all adjustments required to ensure any risks are reduced.

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

14. By ensuring that All Members and employees of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority can carry out their day to day duties in a safe and appropriate way.

BACKGROUND PAPERS
