MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**		
DATE:	**15 DECEMBER 2016**	**REPORT NO:**	**CFO/083/16**
PRESENTING OFFICER	**DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**DEB APPLETON**	**REPORT AUTHOR:**	**WENDY KENYON**
OFFICERS CONSULTED:			
TITLE OF REPORT:	**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2013-17 YEAR 4 ACTIONS 6 MONTH UPDATE**		

APPENDICES:	**APPENDIX A:**	**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN YEAR 4 AND PROGRESS UPDATE AS AT QUARTER 2**
	APPENDIX B:	**EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2016/17, PROGRESS UPDATE AS AT QUARTER 2**

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide Members with :

   a. An update on the agreed Equality and Diversity actions for Year 4 (2016/17) together with an update on progress against the actions for quarter 1 and 2 and;

   b. An update on the progress against the Equality Objectives for 2016/17 as at quarter 2.

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. Members of staff with a responsibility for delivering E&D actions attended a Year 4 E&D planning workshop meeting in April 2016, facilitated by the Diversity and Consultation Manager (DCM), attendees also included the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Lead Councillor for E&D, Cllr Barbara Murray. The workshop provided an opportunity for staff to revisit their achievements for year 3, to plan activities for year four and to add to the priorities contained within the plan to support the achievement of the Local Government Association Equalities Excellence Framework.

Progress

5. Year four of the E&D plan has a total of 27 priorities across all the functions of MFRA. This report provides a high level summary of the activity delivered for each of the priority areas for quarter 1 and 2, where progress has been made to date. Members should note that the report does not necessarily reflect the amount of resources and time taken to achieve and deliver the actions and this will need to be considered when scrutinising the progress, some actions can be delivered very quickly and others could take months or even years to be fully implemented.

6. Appendix A includes updates for each action under the heading "Quarter 1 & 2 update" where there has been activity delivered.

7. Some notable achievements for year 4 delivery so far include;

    a. A total of 3,383 HFSC's have been conducted by the district prevention teams during the 6 month period (April – September) to over 65's, 4% of which were delivered to BME householders. A total of 30,656 HFSC carried out by all staff across the organisation, for this period.

    b. The MFRA E&D Annual Report 2015/16 has been completed and is being distributed to staff and key stakeholders. The report can be found as an electronic version on the Authority website and members will receive their own printed version.

    c. The diversity of young people on our Princes Trust courses increases with the new intake of 44 students during quarter 2. The group has been recruited from different protected and vulnerable minority groups including:

        i. Students with Physical Disabilities (Cerebral Palsy, Hemiplegia, partially sighted)
        ii. Students with Learning Disabilities (including Asperger's, ADHD, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia and Dyscalculia)
        iii. Students with Mental Health disorders (personality disorders, depression and psychosis)
        iv. Asylum seekers and Refugees
        v. Students from the LGBT community
        vi. Students from minority Religions (Pagan and Muslim)

d. The Liverpool Pride event took place in July 2016, with a bigger turn out than previous years. Attendees included Staff, Apprentices, New Recruits, Trade Union Representatives, Authority Members and family and friends. The event also launched the first FireProud Allies Programme. Allies are individuals who do not themselves identify as LGBT but believe that lesbian, gay, bi and trans people should be free to be themselves and reach their full potential. Allies have a critical role to play in creating inclusive environments and they are key to advancing fair treatment for LGBT people in their work, at home and in their communities. To date we have 65 members of staff who have volunteered to be FireProud Allies.

e. The second Staff Engagement Survey has been completed and the results have been communicated to Staff, Authority Members and Representative Bodies. The Survey showed a significant increase of 19% points in the organisation's overall engagement score.

f. Positive Action for the recruitment of Business Fire Safety Advisors (BFSA) in the protection department took place during Quarter 2. The outcomes of the recruitment have been considered and further plans are in place to target BME applicants for future positions. The recent recruitment saw four Female BFSA being successfully recruited, helping to increase the gender diversity of the department.

g. The Wirral District Prevention Team have begun attending the Alzheimer's Society's Weekly Dementia Cafes at four meeting points across Wirral to engage with those affected by dementia and Alzheimer's to offer the support of MFRS prevention function. Fire awareness sessions at Harbour housing for their residents who have long term and enduring mental health issues have also been delivered.

h. Liverpool prevention team supported a family of asylum seekers (3 generations) living on the 13th floor of a block of flats. Translation of Fire safety advice and lift use advice into Bengali was provided, together with information about local facilities and signposting to other services.

i. Sefton District prevention team delivered a Home Safety Presentation for a group of disabled young adults from the Can Do Leonard Cheshire disability group. The session was well received and the group arranged a visit to Bootle and Netherton Community Fire Station.

j. MFRA have recently entered into a new partnership with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council as part of the Syrian Refugee Resettlement programme. An advocate from Sefton district prevention team has been seconded on a part time basis to assist with translation for the Syrian refugee families who are coming to live in Knowsley. This work has been well received in the partnership.

k. The Arson Reduction Advocate from St. Helens district prevention team worked in partnership with Merseyside Police to ensure that a Romany

Gypsy funeral was able to take place safely. A site visit and a meeting with the family established what was going to be involved. And MFRS were able to provide safely advice. There was a reassurance with the local community and businesses but also support from those involved.

8. Progress towards our five Equality Objectives is detailed in Appendix C, against each Objective in graphical format together with a short narrative which explains the position in more detail for scrutiny purposes.

Equality and Diversity Implications

9. 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 CLGA Equality Excellence framework

Staff Implications

10. Staff have been integral to the creation of this report through a number of processes including 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

11. 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

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

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

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

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

14. 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 we support the needs of our staff in relation to their protected characteristics

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

DAG	Diversity Action Group
SEG	Strategic Equalities Group
E and D	Equality and Diversity
HFSC	Home Fire Safety Check
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
SEG	Strategic Equality Group
SMG	Strategic Management Group