

## MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2014</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/075/14</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>CFO STEPHENS</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>CFO STEPHENS</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>AM SEARLE</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>THE FUTURE OF NATIONAL OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A:</b>	<b>LETTER TO NEIL O'CONNOR – 'THE FUTURE OF THE NATIONAL OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE PROGRAMME'</b>
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### Purpose of Report

1. To request that the Authority make a contribution of £25k per year to ensure the continuation of the National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP) on a match funded basis with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

### Recommendation

2. That Members approve a contribution of £25k per year to ensure the continuation of the NOGP on a match funded basis with DCLG.

### Introduction and Background

3. In order to secure the long term future of the NOGP the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) Director of Operations CFO Roy Wilsher wrote to Neil O'Connor on 29<sup>th</sup> May outlining a proposal building on the existing NOGP arrangements to be jointly funded by the sector and DCLG (letter and proposal attached at appendix A).
4. The NOGP was initiated in 2012 and is a partnership between CFOA, the Local Government Association (LGA) and London Fire Brigade (LFB) to produce operational doctrine aimed at Policy writers within Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) to enable them to develop Standard Operational Procedures (SOP's) and safe systems of work for local application.
5. The programme is resourced by a £6m contribution from LFB to cover the period up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. In order to maintain the programme beyond this point agreement is required over a sustainable funding model.
6. The attached report advocates retaining the existing NOGP governance structure funded through tiered contributions aligned to population from Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA's) matched by funding from DCLG. This approach has been

supported at the Fire and Rescue Service Council which is a CJOA forum attended by Chief Fire Officers or their representative from every FRS in the Country.

7. The report sets out the rationale for Government investment in the production of National Operational Guidance highlighting a number of issues including;
  - The state of the extant guidance catalogue (which extends to over 8,000 publications)
  - The findings of public inquiries, significant judgements and reviews
  - The fact that the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 places a local duty on FRS with regards to FRA's collaborating to '*deliver interoperability [which includes] compatible operational procedures, and guidance with common terminology...*'
  - The strong support for the NOGP from the sector
  - The way in which the burden of producing and maintaining guidance can be shared (along with the benefits)
8. The report goes on to list the outcomes achieved by the NOGP to date along with the benefits realised. The report highlights the importance of interoperability and how the NOGP works with partners to improve incident ground working practices (MTFA etc.) and advances the proposed work plan for 2015-18 which covers 34 pieces of guidance which have been identified as being in need of replacement.
9. The report concludes by setting out proposals for the integration of work undertaken in the Regions and by the National Resilience capabilities within the NOGP in order to deliver the full suite of doctrine from strategic level guidance to local SOP's.
10. It is the strong recommendation of the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) that the Authority support this proposal subject to DCLG agreeing to match fund the initiative.

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#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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11. There are no equality and diversity implications contained within this report.

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#### **Staff Implications**

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12. A number of Merseyside personnel are currently seconded to the NOGP and the CFO is the Project Executive for the Performing Rescues project. The full costs of the secondments to the Authority are met by the NOGP however the individuals themselves derive significant professional development through their involvement in developing operational doctrine for consumption across the sector.

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#### **Legal Implications**

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13. The direct legal implications for the Authority are contained within paragraphs 5, 5.1 and 5.2 at page 6 of the attached report.

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#### **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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In supporting the Programme the Authority will be required to contribute £25k per year. This is considered by the CFO to represent excellent value for money on account of the significant benefits that arise from the programme. The costs can be contained within current budgets.

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#### **Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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14. This NOGP commits to produce interoperable guidance and doctrine which is predicated on all reasonably foreseeable hazards and risk control measures to be utilised locally in the production of SOP's and safe systems of work.

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

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15. The Authority Operational Planning Policy assumes the development of local SOP's and hazard and risk control statements based on the doctrine produced through the NOGP. Supporting the NOGP in the future will ensure Merseyside firefighters have access to high quality operational doctrine designed to achieve safe systems of work and enhance the quality of operational response.

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#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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NONE

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#### **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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