

<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>11 JUNE 2015</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/044/15</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>MONITORING OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>JANET HENSHAW</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>JANET HENSHAW</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>STRUCTURE OF THE AUTHORITY</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A: DRAFT AUTHORITY STRUCTURE FOR 2015/16</b> <b>APPENDIX B: TEMPLATE</b> <b>APPENDIX C: ROLE OF LEAD MEMBERS</b> <b>APPENDIX D: ROLE OF MEMBER AMBASSADORS</b>
--------------------	---

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To
  - (a) inform Members of:-
    - (i) the minimum legal structure of the Authority;
    - (ii) the existing decision-making structure of the Authority; and
    - (iii) optional variations to the existing structure.
  - (b) request that the Authority determines an appropriate decision-making structure for 2015/16; and
  - (c) request that arrangements are made for the appointment of Committees, the nomination of Chairs, the determination of the powers and duties of Committees and the appointment of Members to Committees and Lead Member Roles.

### **Recommendation**

2. That Members determine an appropriate decision making structure for 2015/16 by:-
  - (a) Determining which Committees it wishes to establish.

- (b) Determining the number of Voting Members to be appointed to each Committee.
- (c) Determining the number of seats on each Committee to be allocated to each political group in accordance with the political balance regulations.
- (d) Determining that alternates are to be appointed from the relevant political group, who can attend a Committee in the absence of the substantive Member.
- (e) Confirming the Members who are to be appointed to Committees and Lead Member Roles, in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group in respect of those seats allocated to that group.
- (f) Confirming that Members will inform Democratic Services prior to the start of any meeting of an alternate Member if they are unable to attend.
- (g) Confirming whether it wishes to continue with the existing structure and/or whether it wishes to amend the structure

---

## **Introduction and Background**

---

- 3. This report confirms the political balance of the Authority as 16 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Conservative Member.
- 4. Based upon the balance of the Authority, Members are requested to consider and determine the appropriate decision making structure, appointment of Committees, nominate Chairs and Members to those Committees; and nominate Members to the Lead Member and Member Ambassador Roles.
- 5. Minimum Legal Requirement
  - 5.1. The minimum statutory requirements for a decision-making structure are:-
    - (a) Authority Meetings - There is a statutory requirement to hold an Annual Meeting (before the end of June in each year) and to meet to determine the precept each year (by the end of February in each year). The Authority is also required to consider other miscellaneous matters including statutory reports of the Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer and public interest reports should they arise.
    - (b) It is recognised as good practise to have an Audit Committee or a Committee that deals with audit matters.
- 6. Existing Structure
  - 6.1. At present, the Authority has appointed:-
    - (a) A Community Safety and Protection Committee and a Policy and Resources Committee both consisting of 8 Members and a

Performance and Scrutiny Committee consisting of 7 voting Members (according to Political proportionality), open to all Members (with the exception of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Authority), along with an Independent Person who does not have voting rights.

The Community Safety and Protection Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee have delegated decision making powers in the circumstances where there is no opportunity for the Authority to meet in full.

- (b) An Appeals Committee and an Appointments Committee,
- (c) An Audit sub Committee consisting of 5 Members which also deals with Member Standards issues. This sub Committee currently also has responsibility for the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Procedure however this may need to change subject to approval of another report on this Agenda related to this issue, and
- (d) A Consultation and Negotiation sub Committee consisting of 4 Members.

Each Committee has certain delegated powers which are contained within its Terms of Reference.

6.2. The Authority has also:

- (a) appointed Lead Members with additional responsibility for certain services and
- (b) appointed a Member Development Group with approved terms of reference, consisting of Officers from Democratic Services and People & Organisational Development; and one Member from each political group.

7. Determination of a Structure FOR 2015/16

7.1. A draft structure is attached to this report as Appendix A. This incorporates Lead Member and Member Ambassador roles and proposes that:

- (a) The Consultation and Negotiation sub Committee is removed from the Authority structure. Positive approaches to Industrial Relations remains a high priority in this Authority and it is clear that the sub Committee has made a great impact. It is now proposed that quarterly reports are presented to the full Authority to replace this sub Committee so that all Members are fully aware of the issues.

- (b) The current Committee Structure otherwise remains as outlined above with a Policy and Resources Committee; a Community Safety Committee, a Scrutiny and Performance Committee, Audit and Finance Committee, Appeals and Appointments Committees and a Member Development Group.
- (c) Two new Member Ambassador roles are created to deal with issues relating to Youth Engagement and Health and Wellbeing. These roles are proposed as both Youth Engagement and Health and Wellbeing are at the forefront of the Authority's preventative work and aligned to partnerships with other statutory Agencies. These roles would not involve membership of the Performance and Scrutiny Committee but would be aligned to appropriate Senior Officers.

7.2. The proposed Terms of Reference and powers of each Committee and Sub Committee are contained within the Constitution for 2015/16 which is the subject of another report on this Agenda.

7.3. In making their decision on a structure, Members are also requested to take into account the following matters:-

- (a) the requirement for each political group to complete a notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer detailing their Membership and a Group Leader where appropriate;
- (b) the requirement for political balance on any Committees which are appointed and unless the Authority has resolved otherwise and no Member has voted against such resolution;
- (c) the requirement to appoint Members to Committees in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom the seat has been allocated. In this respect it will assist the Clerk if all such nominations can be determined on, or before the Annual Meeting;
- (d) the appointment of Chairs of Committees.
- (e) the appointment of Lead Members; and
- (f) the appointment of Members Ambassadors and
- (g) the requirement for approval of the Powers and Duties of each appointed Committee.

## 8. Number of Seats & Political Balance/Membership of Committees

8.1. The Authority is required to make appointments to its Committees in a manner which, so far as practicable reflects the political balance of the

Authority unless the Authority has resolved otherwise and no Member has voted against such resolution.

- 8.2. There have been local elections this year for the District Councils. As a result the representation of each political group on the Authority will be as follows:-

Labour	16 Members
Liberal Democrat	1 Member
Conservative	1 Member

- 8.3. In order to comply with political balance requirements, where practicable it is therefore appropriate that the proportion of seats on Committees allocated to political groups is as follows :-

Labour	88.88 %
Liberal Democrat	5.56 %
Conservative	5.56 %

- 8.4. Having decided which Committees the Authority is to establish, and the number of Voting Members to be appointed to each Committee, it is then appropriate for each political group to submit nominations for membership of those Committees in accordance with the allocation of seats to that political group.

- 8.5. Members are requested to consider their nominations in advance of the meeting, so that the information can be provided at the Annual Meeting, to enable the Authority to confirm the appointments at the Annual Meeting.

- 8.6. A template for Members to complete is attached as Appendix B to this report.

## 9. Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees

- 9.1. Having determined which Members are to be appointed to the Committees, it is appropriate for the Authority to consider proposals for the appointment of Chairs of Committees.

- 9.2. Members are requested to consider this issue prior to the Annual Meeting with a view to the Authority being in a position to appoint Chairs of Committees at the Annual meeting.

## 10. Dates of Meetings

There is a separate report on this agenda dealing with a draft schedule of dates of meetings. This has been prepared on the basis of the draft Committee structure being approved, although alternative meeting dates will be provided if necessary, if the draft structure is not approved then

---

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

---

11. There are no Equality and/or diversity implications directly related to this report.

---

**Staff Implications**

---

12. There are no direct staff implications contained in this report

---

**Legal Implications**

---

13. The Authority is required by law to set a minimum structure and this report addresses that requirement.

---

**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

---

14. Costs associated with Member Allowances are detailed in another report on this Agenda.

---

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

---

15. There are no direct risk management or health and safety implications contained within this report.

---

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

---

16. Communities are stronger in the knowledge that the Authority has its structure in place.

---

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

---

---

**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

---