

AGENDA ITEM:

REPORT TO:	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE:	TUESDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER 2013
REPORT NO.	CFO/106/13
REPORTING OFFICER:	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
CONTACT OFFICER:	DEB APPLETON, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE, EX 4402
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	
SUBJECT:	MFRA Response to Liverpool City Region Governance Review

THERE ARE APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

APPENDIX (A) TITLE LCR Consultation documents

(B)

Completed feedback form

ATTACHED – HARD COPY

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members consider and approve the proposed response to the Liverpool City Region (LCR) governance review consultation exercise. The consultation documents are attached at appendix A and the proposed response at Appendix B.

Recommendation

2. That Members approve the response to the Liverpool City Region governance review consultation for submission by the deadline of 6th September 2013.

Introduction & Background

3. The Liverpool City Region has undertaken a Governance Review to *“further strengthen the delivery of strategic economic development, regeneration and transport to increase economic growth and jobs, and provide greater transparency. The councils, (Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral), Merseytravel and the Local Enterprise Partnership believe that these arrangements can and should be improved.”*
4. It is the view of the City Region that *“based on the current available evidence, this has led to a preferred option being recommended by the City Region Cabinet which could see a “Combined Authority” being set up. This would strategically lead work on economic development, transport, housing and employment and skills in*

the City Region. A Combined Authority would not mean the creation of a “Super-Council” and would not see powers being transferred away from Local Authorities. It is about being able to draw-down powers, and potentially, resources from Central Government for local use. It would provide clear leadership and quicker decision making processes, while creating a legal entity which would be in a position to attract such funding and devolved powers from Government nationally.”

5. There are two documents which have been produced:
 - A Governance Review, which looks at how functions are organised at the moment, reviews the options for change and recommends that a Combined Authority is formed
 - A Draft Scheme, which sets out the functions of a Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
6. These documents have been considered by Strategic Management Group and other relevant officers and the proposed feedback is attached for Members’ consideration. It is not anticipated that there will be any issues for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority should a Combined Authority be created and there could be potential benefits from the creation of an Authority with a similar footprint to MFRA that sets strategic policy in matters such as housing.

Equality & Diversity Implications

7. There are no equality and diversity implications for MFRA arising from this report. The LCR consultation documents do not appear to contain an equality impact assessment.

Staff Implications

8. There are no staff implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

9. A Combined Authority (CA) can be established under the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 s.103, as well as by virtue of the Localism Act 2011 “well-being powers”. Creation of a CA would mean the abolition of the Merseytravel Authority.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

10. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

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

Contribution to Our Mission – To Achieve; Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters”

12. Although not anticipated to have a significant direct impact on MFRA, the LCR proposals could result in strategies relating to housing, employment, economic development and transport that could have a positive impact on MFRA’s Mission.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Glossary of Terms