

<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2016</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/076/16</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>NICK MERNOCK</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>GARY OAKFORD</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>WENDY KENYON</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>DEFENCE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A:</b>	<b>AFC LOGO (T&amp;C'S)</b>
	<b>APPENDIX B:</b>	<b>BRONZE AWARD CERTIFICATE</b>

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To request that Members note MFRA's active participation in supporting the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.

### **Recommendation**

2. That Members note the content of this report, the successful receipt of Bronze Award and support a future application for Silver Award and aspirational Gold Award Status.

### **Introduction and Background**

3. The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community.
4. The ERS is designed primarily to recognise private sector support although public sector organisations such as the emergency services, local authorities, NHS trusts and executive agencies are also eligible to be recognised.
5. There are 3 levels of Award that can be achieved (Bronze, Silver and Gold).
6. Obtaining the Bronze Award is achieved through self-nomination by employers who pledge to support the armed forces, including existing or prospective employees who are members of the community. MFRA has successfully met the criteria for Bronze Award status (Appendix B).

7. The next level of award (Silver) includes the commitment to promote being armed forces-friendly and being open to employing reservists, armed forces veterans (including the wounded, injured and sick), cadet instructors and military spouses/partners. This should be actively communicated. The organisation should uphold a positive stance to their employees via established HR policies and procedures and be nominated by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party person or organisation. MFRA has already given a commitment to this which is reflected in Service Instruction 0865 Reservists.
8. The next level of award (Gold) includes proactively advocating and supporting defence, communicating commitment internally to employees and externally to the wider community through established policies and examples of support, being positive to all service personnel during recruitment, enabling reservists to fulfil their annual training and mobilisation commitments and by demonstrating significant support for cadet instructors, armed forces veterans (including wounded, injured and sick) and military spouses/ partners.
9. If all 3 awards are achieved MFRA will be required to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and employ at least one individual from the covenant category that the nomination emphasizes.
10. Gold level awards are usually presented at a regional or national level.
11. Cllr Ian Francis (Armed Forces Champion for Liverpool City Council) has kindly offered his support in endorsing any future bid for Silver or Gold Level. Cllr Francis was integral in securing the City of Liverpool as the host City for Armed Forces Week in 2017, in which there will be a series of civic, ceremonial and military displays across the city.

---

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

---

12. Although a formal EIA has not been completed for this report, through the Think People engagement principles MFRA continue to being positive about Equality & Diversity; we value people, differences and respect each other. Understanding that difference is healthy and enables us to deliver services to our diverse communities.

---

### **Staff Implications**

---

13. In line with our Think People engagement principles (and to support a future application for Silver Award status), it is intended to conduct an internal survey of staff to see what connections and level of engagement to the military community exist; for example which branch a staff member served, tenure, regular service or as a reservist.
14. This survey will lead to further dialogue with internal staff members with the intention to extend volunteering opportunities in support of civic events and representation of the service for example at Remembrance Day Parades and other occasions throughout the year. The Service receives over 50 of these requests per annum.

---

## **Legal Implications**

15. Any recruitment of new employees will adhere to MFRA's human resources guidelines as well as compliance with equality and diversity and employment law legislation.

---

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

16. For the purposes of achieving this award there is no additional cost.

---

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

17. There are no Risk Management issues pertaining directly to this report in obtaining the Bronze Award and pursuit of Silver and Gold Award status.

---

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

18. MFRA remains an active and engaged stakeholder within Merseyside, MFRS is held in high regard and has historically supported civic and military events locally.

---

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

---

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

---