

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No

MEETING: 15 SEPTEMBER 2008

SUBJECT: PROVISION OF REINFORCEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY,
THE FINANCE OFFICER AND PERSONNEL ADVISOR**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report outlines for Members the proposed arrangements for the provision of operational assistance between Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will be aware that there is provision within the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to enter into agreements with other Fire and Rescue Authorities in respect of providing operational reinforcements in the event of an emergency occurring in one or the other's geographical boundaries. Under section 13 of the Act, arrangements may be made for the rendering of mutual assistance in discharging the functions of the authorities in question under sections 7 to 9 of the Act. Under section 16, arrangements may be made for securing the actual discharge of another authority's functions under the Act.
- 2.2 The agreement can be entered into on a no-cost basis, where it is determined that the level of assistance provided by one Authority to the other, and vice versa, is broadly similar, or on a cost basis when the assistance provided is exclusive to or of greater benefit to one Authority.
- 2.3 To this end, approval is sought from Members to enter into the following arrangements with County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority.

3 THE ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 Agreement is sought to enter into an arrangement with County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority under sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to provide reinforcements to one another in the event of an emergency occurring on a no-cost basis.
- 3.2 Furthermore, agreement is also sought to enter into a special arrangement to provide Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority with emergency cover of one fire appliance to emergencies on the southbound section of the A19 between Seaton Interchange and Herrington Interchange (or two appliances in relation to road traffic accidents with a person reported trapped) and for operational cover of one fire appliance to emergencies occurring in the Burnmoor, West Rainton, Lumley and Pitlington areas of the County Durham and Darlington area. Assistance provided in relation to incidents on the

southbound carriageway of the A19 would also be at no cost (on the basis that reciprocal cover would be provided by Durham and Darlington in relation to incidents on the northbound carriageway) but the attendance of a fire appliance to emergencies occurring in Burnmoor, West Rainton, Lumley and Pitlington would be subject to the payment of a charge on each occasion at the rate set down in the Local Government Association's (LGA's) standard Scale of Charges.

- 3.3 Finally, approval is also sought to enter into arrangements to provide County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority with Rope Rescue Services in the event of an emergency requiring such assistance.
- 3.4 There will be a financial charge levied whenever rope rescue assistance is provided and this will also be at the rate set down in the LGA's standard Scale of Charges.
- 3.5 It should also be noted that in the unlikely event of a reinforcing fire appliance from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue being required in Durham and Darlington at the same time as it is required to attend an emergency in Tyne and Wear the incident in Tyne and Wear will take precedence.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There is likely to be a net financial benefit to the Authority as a consequence of entering into these arrangements. However, the recompense is liable to be limited and erratic as it is entirely dependent upon the number and nature of incidents that occur in the areas of County Durham and Darlington to which Tyne and Wear will provide cover.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 A risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the risk to the Authority has been minimised as far as practicable. The assessment has considered an appropriate balance between risk and control ; the realisation of efficiencies; the most appropriate use of limited resources; and a comprehensive evaluation of the benefits. The risk to the authority has been assessed as low utilising the standard risk matrix based on control measures being in place. The complete risk assessment is available on request from the Chief Fire Officer.

6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Members are requested to approve entering into agreements with Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority in respect of the following:-

- a) Reciprocal arrangements under section 13 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to provide reinforcements in the event of an emergency, at no charge to either Authority.
 - b) Emergency cover under sections 13 and 16 of the Act in relation to incidents on the A19, at no charge to either Authority, as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report.
 - c) Emergency cover under section 13 of the Act of one fire appliance to property fires with persons reported trapped or road traffic collisions with persons reported trapped in Bournmoor, West Rainton, Lumley and Pittington, as set out in paragraph 3.2, with a charge for use being levied at the appropriate rate in accordance with the LGA's standard scale of charges.
 - d) A Rope Rescue provision to all of Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority's area, with a charge for use being levied at the appropriate rate in accordance with the LGA's standard scale of charges.
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The under mentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

- Fire Services Act 2004
- Agreement between Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Authority and County Durham & Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority