

**MEETING: 23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER, 2009**

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**SUBJECT: MEMBERSHIP OF AUTHORITY AND APPOINTMENT TO  
COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES 2009/2010**

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**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY**

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**1 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER FROM GATESHEAD COUNCIL**

Gateshead Council have now advised that they have appointed Councillor Peter Mole (MBE) (Lab.) to the Authority for the remainder of the municipal year.

The Authority is therefore asked to note the appointment of Councillor Mole and also consider a Labour nomination for the resultant vacancy to the Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee.

**2. THE ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN FIRE AND RESCUE  
AUTHORITIES (AMFRA)**

Following a number of successful meetings, the six Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) (Tyne and Wear, West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, West Midlands and South Yorkshire) have agreed to establish a co-ordinating Group to better promote the views of authorities and add vigour to the dialogue already established between Central Government and those responsible for the delivery of efficient and effective Fire and Rescue Services in these areas. It was also anticipated that the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority would engage as appropriate within discussions.

***The Vision of the AMFRA***

*“To recognise the shared features of metropolitan areas and establish a mutual framework within which the six Fire and Rescue Authorities can improve services and VFM through sharing of information and skills, by exploiting opportunities for joint working and by strengthening the metropolitan areas’ voice in national negotiations”.*

The Group is to be called The Association of Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities (AMFRA) and representation from each Authority would include two elected members (and two named substitutes), the Chief Fire Officer and respective Treasurers.

The Authority is therefore asked to consider two nominations to the Association together with two substitute nominations.

**3. COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL, NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL**

The Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations, 2009 came into force on 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2009. Together with guidance and Home Office advice, these require scrutiny committees to consider co-option of representatives from the 'responsible authorities'.

In connection with this, a request has been received from Newcastle City Council's Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority to appoint a representative to attend future meetings. The Panel has a broad remit covering community safety and is designated as the Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of the Police and Justice Act, 2006 (as amended). As such it will consider all Councillor Calls for Action, including those relating to fires, fire safety, etc.

Given some difference of emphasis between regulations, guidance and advice, the Panel proposes the following arrangement. In addition to meeting regulatory requirements, it also enables members to build a stronger working relationship with the Fire and Rescue Authority/Service; recognising the important role that the Fire and Rescue Authority plays in delivering Local Area Agreement and other key ambitions. The Proposals are that:

- The Fire Authority is invited to appoint one of its Members to sit as a co-opted member of Newcastle City Council's Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- The Authority's representative receives copies of agendas for all panel meetings, but with an expectation attendance is only requested when issues concerning community safety are discussed
- The Authority's representative attend as a non-voting member (reflecting arrangements elsewhere in scrutiny)
- The January meeting of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel provides space on its agenda for the Authority to bring issues it considers appropriate to assist in the formulation/refresh of its three year Corporate Plan
- Co-option to be reviewed, by all parties, with recommendations timely for the start of 2010/11

Similar arrangements have been agreed and implemented with Northumbria Police Authority.

The Authority is therefore asked to consider the co-option of a Member to the Panel.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Authority is requested to:-

- (i) note the appointment of Councillor Mole from Gateshead Council for the remainder of the municipal year;
- (ii) consider the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee;
- (iii) agree nominations of two elected Members and two Substitutes to the Association of Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities; and
- (iv) nominate a representative of the Authority to act as a co-option to the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel of Newcastle City Council.

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#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Notification received from Gateshead Council]
- Notification received from South Yorkshire Joint Secretariat
- The Association of Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities – Draft Constitution
- Notification received from Newcastle City Council – Request: Co-option to Newcastle Scrutiny Committee

