

AGENDA ITEM:

REPORT TO:	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING
DATE:	27TH MAY 2010
REPORT NO.	CFO/094/10
REPORTING OFFICER:	ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE & TREASURER
CONTACT OFFICER:	PHIL WEBSTER, ESTATES DIRECTOR, EXTN 4515
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	SIMON MANSFIELD, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER, EXTN 4421
SUBJECT:	BEST TRAVEL PLAN AWARD

THERE ARE NO APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members note the receipt of the 2009 Best Travel Plan Award which was awarded to the Authority at the Merseyside Transport Awards on 13th October 2009 during the Merseyside Transport Conference 2009.

Recommendation

2. That Members:
 - (a) Note the receipt of the Best Travel Plan Award
 - (b) Note the successes achieved during 2009/10
 - (c) Continue to support the sustainable travel initiatives of the Authority.

Executive Summary

- MFRA has been presented with an award for Best Travel Plan at the annual Merseyside Transport Awards in October 2009.
- MFRA has made considerable progress with sustainable travel initiatives and promotions during 2009/10.
- MFRA has some exciting sustainable transport related projects planned for 2010/11.
- This work contributes to healthier staff and residents of Merseyside and demonstrates compliance with MFRA commitment to the environmental agenda and reduction of emissions.

Introduction & Background

3. Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority was presented with the award for Travelwise Organisation 2009 for best travel plan.
4. A Travel Plan is a site-specific policy and action plan for managing transport effectively, with the aim of improving access to a site by all modes of travel, ensuring choice for everyone. Travel Plans help address transport issues including commuting and business travel, fleet management, business deliveries and transport contracts.
5. A Travel Plan is a package of practical measures and incentives, developed by employers and employees with the aim of reducing car dependency and encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport. Department for Transport (DfT) research shows that a well designed Travel Plan can typically cut commuter car use by 15%.
6. As part of its travel plan in 2008-2009, MFRA introduced a number of initiatives, such as a cycling challenge during Bike Week, where more than 80 staff pledged to cycle to work, and a pedometer challenge with Sefton PCT, which involved teams competing against each other for walking the most steps. We also offered employee loans for public transport season tickets, as well as access to the Cycle to Work Scheme, which allowed staff to buy bikes and cycling accessories at a reduced cost.
7. During March 2010, we ran a Green and Healthy Transport Campaign and realised the following successes:
 - (a) We brought over 130 staff to breakfast sessions over the week, where we influenced travel behaviours and thought processes towards more sustainable travel alternatives. The sessions were there to facilitate car sharing (staff invited by postcode) and promote cycling, public transport and the Cycle to Work Scheme 2010.
 - (b) 19 Car Share spaces were designated and painted at SHQ and the Training and Development Academy. Not only are these being used, but they have stimulated much discussion amongst staff.
 - (c) 2 existing pool bikes serviced and 2 more purchased for use at SHQ.
 - (d) Bike shelters have been installed at City Centre, Bromborough and Speke Fire Stations.
 - (e) Cycle facility signage has been installed to encourage a change in commuter habits at SHQ, Kirkby, Crosby, Toxteth, Wallasey, Mobilisation and Communication Centre and the Training and Development Academy.

- (f) Energy Saving Trust's Smarter Driving Simulator: This was the highlight of the event with a huge uptake from breakfast session attendees. John Price, our People & Organisational Development Officer achieved possibly the highest score in the UK of 63.1, probably making him the most efficient driver in UK, for which EST presented him with a Garmin Ecoroute Satellite Navigation System.
 - (g) Partnership working with Travelwise: Not only did the Travelwise Team contribute £2,000 of funding, they also promoted safer cycle routes, public transport and the green agenda.
 - (h) Launch of Cycle to Work Scheme 2010, with our local partners at Bike2WorkScheme.co.uk in preparation for the opening of the ordering window in August. This is a new iteration of the scheme and focuses on sustainable, vetted, local, quality cycle shops. There have been around 200 enquiries from staff already about the highly popular new scheme.
 - (i) Trial bikes from Liverpool Bicycle Workers Co-operative (Giant Store): The Electric Bike was even tried out by Chief Fire Officer Tony McGuirk and raised a considerable level of interest at Headquarters.
 - (j) Bike Doctor Servicing across MFRA by Liverpool Bicycle Workers Co-operative – Over 60 staff bikes at 5 sites were serviced, and encouraged a large number of staff to get back on their bikes after the winter.
 - (k) 50 goody bags were given to staff that cycled to work during the campaign week (Travelwise kindly supplied promotional items like t-shirts and bike locks) to staff that cycled in to work during our campaign week.
 - (l) The week concluded with a timed trial from the Training and Development Academy to our Headquarters 4.1 miles away. The cycle team completed it in 17 minutes (only 3 minutes behind the van).
8. Our Vehicle Efficiency Project Team (Operational, Equipment and Transport staff with the Environmental Manager) made the following environmental and financial progress during 2009/10:
- (a) Production of a 'Travel Hierarchy' Policy and associated Service Instruction to encourage sustainable business travel choices amongst staff.
 - (b) Promotion of multimedia conferencing as travel alternatives and supply of BT Meetme account.
 - (c) Promotion of car sharing throughout the March 2010 campaign.
 - (d) Identification of underused pool and fleet vehicles for asset disposal efficiency.
 - (e) Provision of reliable and lower emission cars for Flexible Duty Officer use.

9. Travel Plans were produced for the proposed Private Finance Initiative Stations planned for Sefton sites (Bootle, Southport and Formby).
10. MFRA recognises the contribution to travel initiatives made by external partners at:
 - (a) Travelwise
 - (b) Liverpool Bicycle Workers Cooperative (Giant Store Liverpool)
 - (c) Bike2WorkScheme.co.uk
 - (d) Energy Saving Trust
11. MFRA recognises the contribution travel initiatives made by internal partners in:
 - (a) Stores
 - (b) Corporate Communications
 - (c) Occupational Health
 - (d) Community Fire Safety
 - (e) Operational Equipment
12. Transport initiatives planned for 2010/11 include:
 - (a) Trial of Biodiesel in fire engines and ancillary vehicles
 - (b) Trial of Electric Car at Toxteth Fire Station, as part of the national Smart Grid trial in Liverpool 8 district.
 - (c) Provision of Cycle to Work Scheme in August 2010, with an awareness campaign across all sites.
 - (d) Production of Travel Plans for the remaining planned Private Finance Initiative Stations.
 - (e) Completion of action plans within each new Travel Plan.

Equality & Diversity Implications

13. No diversity issues are raised by the receipt of the Best Travel Plan Award. However cycling and car share initiatives have been identified for the potential for perceived exclusion and is therefore the subject of a full Equality Impact Assessment, which has now been approved by the Diversity Action Group.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

14. The award receipt has no financial implications, however, the Green and Healthy Transport Campaign required the following funding:
 - £2,000 external funding won in bid to Travelwise
 - £10,000 from 09/10 Environmental budget

Health & Safety and Environmental Implications

15. The award receipt has no health and safety implications, but the following activities were undertaken to demonstrate compliance with our health and safety policies:
- (a) Risk Assessment completed for Cycling at Work.
 - (b) Training requirement before being allowed to hire a pool bike.
 - (c) Pool bikes serviced and all safety clothing and equipment provided.
 - (d) Method statements acquired before line painting work.

Contribution to Achieving the Vision:

“To Make Merseyside a Safer, Stronger, Healthier Community”

16. The award demonstrates our commitment to reducing travel impacts, which leads to:
- (a) An improvement in air quality across Merseyside
 - (b) A reduction in congestion in Merseyside
 - (c) Health benefits for staff that walk and cycle.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None