

AGENDA ITEM:

REPORT TO:	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING
DATE:	17TH SEPTEMBER 2009
REPORT NO.	CFO/205/09
REPORTING OFFICER:	ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
CONTACT OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER STEPHENS EXT 4315
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	GARRY WILLIAMS, HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGER
SUBJECT:	HEALTH AND SAFETY PLEDGE

THERE ARE NO APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

Purpose of Report

1. To advise Members of the request from CFO Mark Smitherman (Chief Fire Officers Association Health & Safety Lead) for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) to sign the Health and Safety 'Pledge' and to seek approval for the Health and Safety Member Champion to do so on behalf of the Authority.

Recommendation

2. That Members approve the signing of the Health and Safety 'Pledge' by the Health and Safety Member Champion on behalf of the Authority.

Introduction & Background

3. The Health and Safety 'Pledge' was launched on 3rd June 2009 and is part of a strategy by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) titled 'Be Part of the Solution' to encourage employers to publicly make a commitment to advance the cause of health and safety during the recession.
4. The 'Pledge' was launched at Westminster by the Chair of the HSE Judith Hackitt CBE, the Secretary of State for Work & Pensions the Rt. Hon. James Purnell and Brendan Barber General Secretary of the TUC. Also, on the panel launching this initiative was Chair of Local Government Association (LGA) Human Resources Panel Sir Steve Bullock, Parliamentary Under Secretary Lord Mackenzie of Luton and Department of Work and Pensions Minister with responsibility for Health & Safety Geoffrey Podger.
5. The overall intention of the 'Pledge' is to address the results of a consultation conducted by the HSE during May 2009 in which less than half of business

leaders questioned stated that health and safety is at the centre of their business.

6. It is also the intention of the HSE to use this strategy to counter the clichés that health and safety has gone too far and to reverse myths and mis-information about health and safety in general.
7. Signing 'The Pledge' gives a public understanding that the signatories:-
 - Agree to play their part in reducing the numbers of work-related deaths, injuries and ill-health in Great Britain.
 - Call on employers to put health and safety at the heart of what they do and to take a common sense approach to health & safety.
 - Commit to debunking myths around health and safety that trivialise the impact of injuries, ill health and deaths of individuals and their families.
 - Recognise the importance of health and safety in difficult economic times and the dangers of complacency.
 - Pledge to work with the Health and Safety Executive and its partners to be Part of the Solution.
8. At the CFOA FRS Health and Safety Group meeting on 25th June 2009, it was agreed that the Group would fully support the initiative. Mark Smitherman, in his role as Chair of the Group, has written to Health and Safety practitioners within the FRS to encourage them to endorse this strategy and sign the 'Pledge'.
9. A link to the strategy and the 'Pledge' is detailed below:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/pledge.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/signup.htm>

Equality & Diversity Implications

10. None contained within this report.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

11. None contained within this report.

Health & Safety and Environmental Implications

12. Signing of the Health and Safety pledge shows a commitment by MFRA to the embedding of a safety culture within the organisation.

Contribution to Achieving the Vision:

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

13. The embedding of a safety culture within MFRA will enhance the health, safety and welfare of all employees.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None