

## **Report of the Head of Operational Support**

### **10. Health & Safety Audit - 2013**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To inform Committee Members of the outcomes of the Health and Safety Audit undertaken in November 2013.

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#### **Recommendations**

**It is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee:**

- i. note the content of the Health & Safety Audit Report; and*
- ii. note the high level action plan to discharge the 25 recommendations from the report.*

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. In November 2013 the Assistant Chief Fire Officer requested a comprehensive internal audit of Health and Safety arrangements within the Service. The purpose of the audit was to seek assurance that the Service is meeting its full responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation.
3. In June 2013 the Department for Communities and Local Government released the *Health, Safety and Welfare Framework for the Operational Environment* guidance document to be used by Fire and Rescue Authorities. This framework was designed to assist Fire and Rescue Authorities in balancing risks in their wider role to protect public and property, while meeting their health and safety at work duties to protect their staff and the wider community.
4. During the same period the Health and Safety Executive released *Leading Health and Safety at Work - Actions for Directors, Board Members, Business Owners and Organisations of all Sizes*. This guidance sets out an agenda for the effective leadership of health and safety.
5. The internal audit commissioned by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer was designed to utilise both of the above documents as a guide to assessing whether or not existing arrangements are sound and appropriate for the organisation both now and in the future.

## Findings

6. The Service was found to be generally compliant against the framework document and the Health and Safety Guidance document (HSG65) which forms the basis of the framework publication. This audit found strong evidence that the Service meets accountability, workforce engagement, scrutiny, corporate strategy, standards, comparison, provision for quality training, and clear leadership.
7. The corporate governance of the Service's health and safety function was found to be well aligned to the essential principles contained within the *Leading health and safety at work* publication. The Service demonstrates real commitment to the management of health and safety with clearly established mechanisms in place within the Service. There is a commitment towards local, regional, and national health and safety issues and implications which show the Service is performing well against both the guiding principles and essential principles that form the mainstay of both publications.
8. Any areas identified within this report as not satisfactory have been deemed to be relatively minor in nature. This report therefore makes 25 specific recommendations relating to the four work packages which should be acted upon accordingly.

## Conclusion/Summary

9. The audit has concluded that the Service is performing well in a number of areas but has also identified areas for improvement. The audit found the health and safety culture pervaded the Service at all levels and significant improvement had been made against the backdrop of previous audits.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Some areas of development will be required to address current internal recording systems, mainly contained in TC recommendations.  Page 23 of audit report
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	See - 25 recommendations contained within the audit report.
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Representative bodies consulted and involved during the audit
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Yes

**Supporting Information**

Appendix 1: Health and Safety Audit Report

**Background Information**

DCLG: Health, Safety and Welfare Framework for the Operational Environment

HSE: Leading Health and Safety at Work - Actions for Directors, Board Members,  
Business Owners and Organisations Of All Sizes

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