

13. Update from the Health and Safety Liaison Panel

Purpose of report

1. To provide the Policy and Resources Committee with a report on the work undertaken through the Service's Health and Safety Liaison Panel.

Recommendation

The Chief Fire Officer recommends that this report is noted by the Policy and Resources Committee.

Introduction and Background

2. The Service has a dedicated and sustained commitment to all aspects of Health and Safety both with its employees and towards the communities it serves. Whilst these commitments are many and numerous the Service captures this wealth of activity through its Health and Safety Liaison Panel that consists of the respective key managers, specialists and the representative bodies. This group meets quarterly, is chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and fulfils the Service's statutory responsibility in this area.

Update from the Health and Safety Liaison Panel

3. The Health and Safety Liaison Panel last met on 5 May 2011.
4. The following matters were raised and addressed:
 - Specialist Health and Safety Accident Investigations: these were all currently up to date and had been debriefed. The outcomes had identified no significant implications. The quality and thorough nature of these investigations was noted.
 - Quarterly Health and Safety Performance and the relevant data were reviewed. An increase in the levels of reported verbal abuse towards Firefighters from the public was noted and will be monitored in the future. Whether this is a trend due to increased reporting and awareness or an actual increase in numbers of incidents is unclear based upon the current information.
 - The Health and Safety training plan for this financial year was presented, which included enhanced training for middle managers and a continuing increase in the levels of training for supervisory managers and commanders. Specialist bespoke training for those requiring it has also been programmed (such as Fleet Technicians). This has been developed and planned through the Health and Safety Working Group.
 - A review of the recorded Service vehicle impacts and collisions for the previous year was presented. The numbers of low level collisions (including reversing) and the potential for these to cause injury, as well as the financial

impact of these repairs and the time lost for vehicles being unavailable during repair was raised. It is important not to penalise drivers or create a negative culture around this issue, however increased managerial attention is required to raise awareness.

- The Health and Safety Working Group has developed a Manager's Handbook which will be issued throughout the Service. This will provide concise information to all managers and commanders in the Service on the broad range of Health and Safety responsibilities. The Handbook will also enable managers to effectively plan their duties relating to Health and Safety in the workplace. The document signposts where more detailed information and training on these issues can be found. This was developed as a result of the audits carried out last year where effective guidance and planning regarding Health and Safety duties was found to need support across the Service.

Conclusions/Summary

5. Health and Safety matters from the Liaison Panel will be reported after each meeting to the Senior Management Board.

Financial Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
There are financial issues that require consideration	Y	Para 4 points 3, 4 & 5 all have cost implications.

Legal Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
There are legal issues e.g. contractual and procurement, reputational issues that require consideration	Y	Whole document based upon legislative requirements of Health and Safety.

Additional Considerations

6. The table below sets out any additional issues arising from the proposals contained in this report and identifies the relevant paragraphs in the report where such issues are addressed.

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
Resources (e.g. Assets, ICT, Human Resources, Training & Development, Sustainability).	Y	As above for training
Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact).	N	
Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).	N	
Consultation with Representative Bodies	N	Rep Bodies involved at Working Group and Liaison Panel

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