

**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item No 8**

**MEETING: 18 JANUARY 2016**

---

**SUBJECT: MIND BLUE LIGHT TIME TO CHANGE PLEDGE**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE  
DEPUTY CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY, THE FINANCE OFFICER AND THE  
PERSONNEL ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY**

---

**1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This report provides Members with information regarding the Authority's commitment to the Mind Blue Light Time to Change Pledge.

**2 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Mind Blue-light Programme is part of the government's commitment to improving the wellbeing of people the workforce.

2.2 Mind has been awarded LIBOR funding to develop the Blue Light Programme, to provide mental health support for emergency services staff and volunteers from police, fire, ambulance and search and rescue services across England.

2.3 The programme has been developed in consultation with individuals from across the emergency services and is being delivered in partnership with Time to Change. Commitment to the programme is also actively being encouraged by CFOA.

**3 BLUE-LIGHT TIME TO CHANGE PLEDGE**

3.1 TWFRS has built up a strong reputation in the way we promote and deliver mental health awareness within the workforce. Work has concentrated on direct Occupational Health Unit support and raising awareness of stress-related illness; including stress awareness training, in partnership with the FBU, and specific support for staff who have encountered stressful and traumatic events at operational incidents through the dedicated Trauma Support Team.

3.2 The Blue-light Programme compliments this work through developing a commitment, or pledge, from participant organisations to provide strategies, training and workplace champions that specifically support individuals suffering from mental illness.

3.3 Working with local Mind Charities and Time to Change representatives, officers have developed an action plan from TWFRS including commit to sign a pledge to the programme, whilst working towards improved outcomes for staff.

3.4 Mind have welcomed our commitment which has resulted in TWFRS being accepted on to the programme. The pledge signing event will take place on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016, with the launch of the programme on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

#### **4 LEGISLATIVE IMPACTS**

4.1 The Service has a responsibility to fulfil the obligations set out in Regulation 5 of the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, in particular to take reasonable steps to prevent and protect the health, safety and welfare of employees. Mental health is a key part of the welfare arrangements that the Service should consider in the discharge of this duty.

#### **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The financial implications of this report are currently being assessed and are expected to be minimal. The main aspects of the proposed commitment to the Blue Light Programme are expected to be provided through training and support delivered by Mind and Time to Change.

#### **6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Participating in the Blue Light Programme demonstrates to staff and other stakeholders that TWFRS is dedicated to remaining at the forefront of work that supports staff and the Authority's commitment to promoting full attendance in the workplace, whilst fully supporting a diverse workforce.

#### **7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

#### **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 The Authority is recommended to:

- a) Note the content of this report;
- b) Support participation in the Blue-light Programme;
- c) Attend the pledge signing and launch event;
- d) Receive further reports as appropriate.