

SUBJECT: HSE PLEDGE 'BE PART OF THE SOLUTION'**REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is to advise Members about the introduction of a pledge, launched by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) on Wednesday 3rd June 2009, to encourage employers to keep their staff safe at work.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 clearly places responsibility on those who create the risk to manage it. All workers have a fundamental right to work in an environment where risks to health and safety are properly controlled. The primary responsibility for this lies with the employer. However, workers have a duty of care for their own health and safety and for others who may be affected by their actions. Legislation also requires that workers co-operate with employers on health and safety issues.
- 2.2 One of the most effective ways to improve health and safety practices is for senior management to show positive leadership on the issue. Consequently the HSE has requested all Fire and Rescue Authorities to sign the pledge to 'Be Part of the Solution' and continue to improve health and safety standards.
- 2.3 The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), as a corporate body has already signed the 'HSE Pledge' and reaffirmed its' commitment to making the safety of its staff top priority by supporting this new health & safety drive. As CFOA represents the fire and rescue service, they are also encouraging Fire and Rescue Authorities to sign up too.

3 HSE PLEDGE 'BE PART OF THE SOLUTION'

- 3.1 The Authority continues to demonstrate a commitment to protecting the health and wellbeing of its' employees and the team approach to a positive health and safety culture that exists at all levels throughout the Authority will ensure this excellent performance will be maintained.
- 3.2 In recognising and underpinning this commitment, the Chief Fire Officer considers that it would prove beneficial for the Authority to sign the Health & Safety Pledge. Should Members approve the proposal, the undoubted commitment of the Authority will be formally recognised, with additional benefits for the Authority of:

PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING

- Continuing to play an active part in reducing the numbers of work-related deaths, injuries and ill health in Great Britain.
- Underpinning the commit to debunking myths around health and safety that trivialise the impact of injuries, ill health and deaths on individuals and their families.
- Continuing recognition of the importance of health and safety in difficult economic times and the dangers of complacency.
- Working closely with the Health and Safety Executive and its partners to 'Be Part of the Solution'.

3.3 If approved, signing the pledge emphasises the continuing success of the Authority in once again being awarded the RoSPA Gold Award together with the key elements of the Authority's health and safety management system including health and safety policy, arrangements, organisation, audit and review. The co-operation and arrangements for management and employees to work together in order to achieve the goal of a safe working environment is also recognised.

3.4 In addition, the Authority will gain further recognition through positive public relations as well as continuing to demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement to health, safety and welfare.

4 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Members are recommended to:-

- a) Endorse the Chief Fire Officer in signing the HSE Pledge "Be part of the Solution"
- b) Agree that the Chief Fire Officer maintains the Authority's commitment to a safe working environment.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The undermentioned Background Papers relate to the subject matter of the above report:

- HSE "The Health and Safety of Great Britain - Be Part of the Solution".