



AGENDA ITEM: 12

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

18th June 2007

CHAMPIONS WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Joint Report by Councillor Ted George, Member Support and Development Champion and Rhian Evans, Member Liaison Officer

Purpose of Report

- 1.** To inform members of the work of the Community Safety and Member Support and Development Champions Working Group.
- 2.** To seek members' approval for the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development Fire and Rescue Authority draft Role Descriptions and Person Specifications.

Background

- 3.** At its meeting on 19th March 2007 the Fire and Rescue Authority resolved to establish a Working Group with a view to promoting and progressing members' support and development in line with the requirements of the "Wales Charter for Member Support and Development: An Approach for Fire and Rescue Authorities".
- 4.** In addition to being a Working Group for the purposes of the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development members' decided to combine the Group's remit with that of the Community Fire Safety Champions Working Group.



Information

- 5.** The Champions Working Group held its inaugural meeting on 12th April 2007. At that meeting copies of the draft terms of reference for the Working Group; the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development: an Approach for Fire and Rescue Authorities; the associated draft Fire and Rescue Authority Role Descriptions and Person Specifications; a draft Member Development Strategy and a copy of the Service's 3 Year Community Safety Strategy were distributed and discussed. In addition Working Group members were given an insight by the Service's County Safety Managers into the community safety work and initiatives which were currently underway in the six unitary authority areas.
- 6.** At its subsequent meeting on the 18th May 2007 members gave further consideration to the Working Group's terms of reference and the Charter related draft documents distributed at the previous meeting. Following a discussion the Group agreed on the terms of reference, a copy of which is attached at Appendix A for members' information. These terms of reference will be revisited on a regular basis to ensure their compatibility with the Authority's ever evolving needs. As a matter of interest it is worth noting that the Working Group's dual role, reflected in its terms of reference, fits in with the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG's) vision for public services under its 'Making the Connections' policies. In one of the latest policy statements published under this agenda, 'A Shared Responsibility – Local Government's Contribution to Improving People's Lives' published in March 2007, WAG specifically states that it "...will support the WLGA's Membership Charter, and encourage councils [which includes fire and rescue authorities] to promote member engagement in performance plans and appraisals, developmental opportunities and annual reports. We expect this to raise levels of responsibility and accountability, especially in relation to services to vulnerable people".



Information *(continued)*

- 7.** At the same meeting the Group accepted the draft Member Development Strategy and also amended the Fire and Rescue Authority Member Role Descriptions and Person Specifications to suit the needs of this Authority. The latter are attached at Appendix B for members' consideration and approval. The Working Group also nominated Councillor E C George as the Champion for Member Support and Development and recommended that all six members should act as the Authority's Community Safety Champions for their own unitary authority areas.
- 8.** Amongst the other issues discussed at the meeting was the effect and implications of the increased Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) campaign, arson in schools and member engagement in local community safety work. As a result of the discussion on the latter subject it was decided, with a view to increasing member involvement and enhancing relationships, that all Fire and Rescue Authority members would periodically be invited to attend meetings of their local County Safety Team.
- 9.** As a matter of good corporate governance it was decided that the Working Group should, on a quarterly basis, present an information report on its activities to the Fire and Rescue Authority.

Recommendations

- 10.** That members:
 - 10.1** note the contents of the report and the progress to date in relation to Community Safety and Member Support and Development;



Recommendations *(continued)*

10.2 confirm the appointment of Councillor E C George as the Member Support and Development Champion and that all six Working Group members be appointed as Community Safety Champions for their respective unitary authority areas; and

10.3 to approve the adoption of the draft Fire and Rescue Authority Member Role Descriptions and Person Specifications as North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's Member Role Descriptions and Person Specifications.