



AGENDA ITEM: 17

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

15th June 2009

Corporate Health Activity

Report by ACFO Ruth Simmons

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report is for information and details the Authority's corporate health activity.

Background

- 2 In 2003 the 'Review of Health and Social Care in Wales' showed that the demand for health and care services is unsustainable in the longer term. WAG's Health Challenge Wales has been developed to help contribute towards preventing ill health in the first place and freeing up the health service to treat unavoidable disease. Subsequently, 'Well Being in Wales' emphasised that everyone has a part to play in improving health in Wales. In short, health is everybody's business.
- 3 Health at Work: The Corporate Standard is a quality award scheme operated by the Welsh Assembly Government to recognise good practice in workplace health. The scheme is endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive, CBI Wales and Wales TUC. The standard is a tool for developing policy and for promoting the health and wellbeing of employees.
- 4 To gain an award, an organisation has to demonstrate active commitment to workplace health promotion. Health promoting activity is measured across a range of core components covering

organisational commitment, communication, monitoring, review and evaluation and the degree to which employees are involved in workplace health promotion. Attention is given to specific health issues such as stress, tobacco, alcohol and drugs, exercise, nutrition, first aid and CPR, workplace risks, men's and women's health.

- 5 Successful organisations are awarded the Standard at bronze (entry level), silver or gold level and hold the award for three years.

Information

- 6 NWFRS gained the Silver Award in March 2007 and, due to the high quality of the assessment, immediately committed to achieve the Gold Standard, which was secured in February 2008. Particular strengths were around health and safety, mental health promotion, nutrition, physical activity and green travel.

- 7 The assessors noted that:
“---an enormous amount of progress has been made and the ethos and philosophy of the Corporate Health Standard seems even more embedded into the values of the organisation”.

- 8 The opening address of the NWFRS Gold Award Ceremony was given by the Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Wales who recognised that a strong corporate lead underpinned the advancement of corporate health.

Sports Council for Wales

- 9 Following the achievement of the Gold Award, NWFRS and North Wales Police jointly secured funding from the Sports Council for Wales for a Physical Activity Coordinator. The post is funded for two years until June 2010. The Coordinator's action plan covers all the specific health criteria and features a physical activity staff survey and the introduction of health and wellbeing days. Employees are able to access health and fitness assessments and consult with agencies such as:

Smoking Cessation Services
Alcohol and Substance Misuse awareness
Slimming World
Breast Cancer Care
National Blood Donors

- 10 A subsequent joint bid for an additional £104,000 from the Sports Council has funded cycle shelters, racks, 28 pool bikes and additional cycling equipment located at County Offices and at Service Headquarters.

Corporate Leisure Facility Membership

- 11 Corporate Leisure Facility Membership at discounted rates has been secured for personnel at a range of private and County Council facilities across North Wales. In addition, lunchtime activity sessions are available, including salsa aerobics, tai chi and circuit training.

Platinum Award

- 12 NWFRS is currently preparing for an assessment against the Platinum Standard. The Platinum Standard is directed towards exemplary Gold Award holders who demonstrate corporate social responsibility in minimising the economic, social and environmental impact of the way that they operate. NWFRS will need to evidence sustainable development in:

Transport
Capital build
Waste
Community engagement
Employment and skills
Facilities management

- 13 A case study must be submitted to demonstrate an inspiring and innovative example of achieving a positive impact on the health and well being of the wider society.

- 14 The NWFRS case study will focus on community engagement and feature Rhyl 1st, the first community fire station in North Wales.

Recommendation

- 15 That Members note the content of the report.