



AGENDA ITEM: 11

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE PANEL

19th September 2011

WELSH LANGUAGE BOARD MONITORING REPORT

Report by Colin Hanks, Assistant Chief Fire Officer

Purpose of Report

- 1 To seek approval for the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Welsh Language Scheme Monitoring Report for 2010-11 prior to formal submission to the Welsh Language Board.

Background

- 2 Each year, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is required to produce a detailed report on its Welsh Language Scheme to the Welsh Language Board. This details progress made towards meeting the targets outlined in the Service's Welsh Language Scheme 2010-13.

Information

- 3 Last year, the Welsh Language Board commended the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority on the submission of a comprehensive report that showed progress in the operation of the Welsh Language Scheme during 2009-10.
- 4 This year's report again outlines the work that has been achieved during the past financial year in ensuring that we provide bilingual services to the people of North Wales.
- 5 The period from 2010-11 has seen significant progress particularly in relation to promoting the availability of our home fire safety checks bilingually. The 'Mae Gen Ti Ddewis' campaign was extended in March 2011 when the three fire and rescue services in

Wales collaborated again, with financial support from the Welsh Language Board, this time in the production of a new DVD to raise the profile of bilingual home fire safety checks with the help of Welsh celebrity Sarra Elgan. In North Wales the campaign resulted in a substantial increase in checks carried out in Welsh – 5.98% of total checks carried out in Welsh in January-April 2010 compared to 11.71% in the same period this year when the campaign was launched.

- 6 Our Welsh Language Scheme stipulates the requirement for all new members of staff and those successful in promotion to learn basic conversational Welsh to Level 2 standard in our CD programme and this has also continued to be promoted amongst existing staff during 2010-11. A number of successful Welsh learning events has taken place at various fire stations throughout North Wales to provide an opportunity for staff to take advantage of this learning programme and to learn more about the Welsh language resources available. A total of 59 staff have attained success in Level 1 Welsh, 103 in Level 2 Welsh and 8 in Level 3 Welsh during 2010-11.
- 7 The Monitoring Report also highlights the work carried out in relation to promoting Welsh within our workplace as well as providing a bilingual service to the public. We were again successful for a second successive year in our application for a grant from the Welsh Language Board towards promoting Welsh within our workforce. This project included establishing and supporting our Welsh Language Champions across the region and promoting bilingual meetings internally. The achievements made in this area will continue to be developed in the long term.
- 8 In January 2010 a new set of performance indicators were agreed for the Service in relation to the Welsh language and data relating to Welsh language skills and learning is now being collated and recorded in the HR department Workforce database. May 2011 was the first time that this data has been available to provide an up to date snapshot of skills for 2010-11 and it will provide a valuable tool for monitoring progress and targeting any areas of improvement.

Recommendation

- 9 That Members note the progress made in relation to the Welsh Language Scheme and approve the 2010-11 Monitoring Report prior to formal submission to the Welsh Language Board.