SUMMARY

This report informs Members that GMFRA have been successful in achieving Level 1 of the North West Charter on Elected Member Development.

(Contact Officer: Donna Parker, Democratic Services Manager, Tel. 0161 608 4087, parkerd@manchesterfire.gov.uk)

BACKGROUND

1. In accordance with a recommendation of the meeting of the Policy Committee on 14 May 2009 the Authority has formally committed to achieving Level 1 of the North West Charter on Elected Member Development.

2. The aim of the Charter is to demonstrate commitment to, and achieve excellence in, elected member development to ensure that Members are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to perform their various roles as community representatives including their vital role in modernising local government.

3. Evidence required to support an application for the North West Charter Level 1 includes proving that the Authority has met the following six principles/elements:

   - Having a statement of intent;
   - Ensuring that all Members are made aware of training and development opportunities;
   - Having a process to identify individual development needs which involves Members;
   - Having a strategy to meet the training and development needs of Members;
   - Having an Officer allocated to assist Members and groups in identifying needs and providing information on resources;
   - Implementing the strategy locally.
GMFRA COMMITMENT TO THE CHARTER

4. Over the past 18 months the Democratic Services Section along with Elected Members have been working hard to improve the Member Training and Development process for both new and existing Members on the Authority.

5. At the meeting of the Personnel Committee on 27 May 2009 the principle of establishing a Member Development Steering Group was agreed, to which seven Members and two Independent Members were appointed.

6. The Member Development Steering Group have been involved in developing the following pieces of work to support the Charter:-

- Member Role;
- Adopting GMFRS Values and Behaviours;
- Member Induction Process;
- Member Training & Development Programme;
- Arranging Member Training and Development Sessions/Visits;
- Member Personal Development Plan Process;
- Analysing Feedback from Member Training and Development Sessions.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

7. In July 2010 it was felt that GMFRA were in a position to apply for the Charter. Sue Baxendale from North West Employers attended a meeting of the Member Development Steering Group on 15th July 2010 and explained the Assessment Process to both Members and Officers.

8. The GMFRA Member Development Level 1 Assessment Visit took place on 23rd September 2010. The Assessment Visit was conducted by Councillor Alan Dean, Elected Member from the North West Employers Executive Board (Liverpool City Council) and Kelli Pickford, Director of Learning and Improvement from North West Employers. The interviews took place throughout the day and the following people were selected to participate in the interview process:

- Chairman of the Authority – Councillor Paul Shannon
- County Fire Officer and Chief Executive – Steve McGuirk
- Leader of Opposition – Councillor Fred Walker
- Member Champion for Member Development – Councillor John Bell
- Chairman of the Human Resources Committee – Councillor Iain Lindley
- A newly Elected Member – Councillor Jackie Harris
- 2 existing Members – Councillors David Acton & Paul Ankers
- 1 Independent Member – Mr. Ken Harper
- Democratic Services Manager – Donna Parker
9. Prior to the interviews taking place the Democratic Services Manager produced and submitted two portfolios of evidence to North West Employers to support our application.

ACHIEVING THE CHARTER

10. The North West Employers Regional Development Committee met on 12th October 2010 to discuss our assessment visit and portfolio of evidence and the Committee had no hesitation in awarding Level 1 of the Charter to Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority.

Attached at Appendix 1 of the report is a copy of the Report which was submitted to the above, for Members information. The report includes particular areas of good practice that were found and also areas for continuous improvement which will be an important part of the Charter Review in three years’ time.

11. The Charters awarded will be presented at a ‘Celebration Event’ which will be hosted by North West Employers and the Municipal Journal on Friday 26 November at Lancashire Cricket Club. At this Event each successful Authority will provide a short presentation on ‘their journey’ to achieving the Charter. Councillors David Acton, John Bell, Iain Lindley and Wendy Meikle will be attending from GMFRA.

12. Members who participated in the Assessment Interviews are welcome to feedback their own experiences to the meeting.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

13. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report and application of the policies referred to in this report have no adverse impact on any particular minority group.

RECOMMENDATIONS

14. The Committee is asked to:

1) Note the content of the report.

2) Continue to support Member Training and Development in Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority.

STEVE McGUIRK
COUNTY FIRE OFFICER
& CHIEF EXECUTIVE
# LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

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<td><a href="www.nweo.org.uk">www.nweo.org.uk</a></td>
<td>North West Employer Organisation Website</td>
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S. McGuirk  
(Proper Officer)  
18.10.10